Disputation on Essence, Existence, and Subsistence

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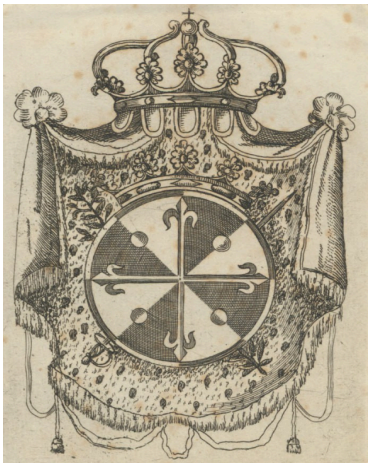
Cursus theologicus, De Deo uno, disp. 4, art. 1-4
pp. 550-607



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Disputation IV.
On the Simplicity of God and the Composition of Creatures.

In this disputation we shall treat only those matters which have some special difficulty concerning the composition of the creature and the simplicity of God, such as the composition of subsistence and existence, and of genus and difference; for the remaining modes of composition are without difficulty, nor are there any special controversies about them at present. But in order to explain these matters, it is necessary, for the present purpose, to set forth beforehand some things drawn from what we said in the first book of the Physics, question 7, concerning existence and subsistence.

ARTICLE ONE.
Whether subsistence and nature are distinguished in every creature, and in what way?

I. That in substances, beyond singularity and individuation, subsistence is given, is established both from what faith teaches and from what we know through natural reasoning. From faith indeed, the mystery of the Incarnation and of the Trinity has made this manifest to us; for in the mystery of the Incarnation it is established by faith that human nature is in Christ, and that the personality is not human but divine, and such human nature was assumed not in the universal but in the singular; nor is that singular unity attributed to it by the Word, but the nature is presupposed to be really one, just as it is really a being; and real unity is singular, because on the part of the thing nothing can be given except something singular. Therefore singularity is distinguished from personality. Similarly in God the Persons are really multiplied without the singularity of the nature being multiplied. Therefore the nature of singularity and personality stands differently in God, and much more will they be distinguished in creatures.

II. From natural effects the same can also be gathered. First, because singularity is common even to accidents — for there is this whiteness and this blackness and this quantity — but subsistence belongs only to substances; therefore from its concept singularity and subsistence are not the same. Second, because subsistence renders a thing subsistent and sustaining others, and existing in itself without the need of further communication to another subsistent and sustaining subject, which singularity and individuation alone do not do, as is evident in singular accidents. And the reason is that singularity is opposed only to universality and renders nature contracted and incommunicable to lower inferiors; whereas subsistence is not directly opposed to universality but to inherence, and renders nature incommunicable to a further terminus as sustaining and subsisting under it, such that subsistence removes the dependence in being on a further terminus or subject that inherence posits. And although this can only be found in singulars, because only they can have being, nevertheless singularity and subsistence express diverse formalities, even though both are incommunicable — because the incommunicability of singularity is with respect to inferiors, so as not to be contracted through them; whereas the incommunicability of subsistence is with respect to a further terminus, so as not to be sustained by it and to subsist under it in being. Thus subsistence and nature are considered as quantity and a point: for quantity — for example, a line — is composed of parts but terminated by a point, which is something superadded to the parts; so subsistence does not stand as a composing part of substance but as a terminus rendering it standing in itself and incommunicable in being.

III. And although many things pertaining to subsistence are usually treated in the matter on the Trinity and Incarnation, it is nevertheless necessary to touch on those things in the present place that can serve as a foundation for understanding what is treated afterwards in the said matters. And especially because the understanding of Saint Thomas in this third article concerning the distinction of subsistence from nature in those things that are not

composed of matter and form urgently presses here. And therefore in this article we shall treat three things: first, how it is established that subsistence is distinguished from nature; second, whether subsistence adds something positive above nature, which is a mode or a thing, for on this depends the investigation of this composition from nature and subsistence; third, how Saint Thomas is to be understood when in this third article he seems to deny the distinction of subsistence and nature in simple things.

First Difficulty.

IV. It is established from what has been said that subsistence is given in substantial natures. And speaking in general it is also established that subsistence must be distinguished from nature, whether it is something negative or positive — about which later. For this was made manifest to us by the mystery of the Incarnation, in which the human nature was assumed by the divine Person without its own subsistence and personality, since it is of faith that in Christ there is no created person but only the divine one, in which the human nature subsists. Nor can it be said that in the assumed human nature there remains a created personality as to entity, even if not as to effect or denomination, because it is derived from another superior personality which, by assuming the nature to itself, does not permit that entity of the created subsistence to render nature subsistent in itself and existing in itself but in another. For against this: otherwise there would be in Christ an entitatively created person in reality, and as to its reality; but if the entire reality of the person is in the nature, then the Word not only assumed the nature but also the person, since it would have assumed the entire reality of the person — which Augustine denies in his book De Fide ad Petrum, and Saint Thomas proves in III, q. 4, a. 2, and q. 2, a. 3 — and so there would be really and entitatively two persons in Christ, even though the denomination would be made only from one, namely the divine one which is more principal. Moreover, in the Fifth General Council, canon 5, it is said that if

anyone should attempt to introduce into the mystery of Christ two subsistences or two persons, let him be anathema. Now it is established that one who would posit the entire entity of a created person in Christ as assumed by the divine Person would be attempting to introduce two persons, for he only acknowledges one as to denomination, because it is more worthy and more principal. Now Nestorius, who posited two persons in Christ, did not deny this; rather he said that the union had been made in the more principal person according to dignity. Therefore the faith of the Incarnation has sufficiently made manifest to us that personality must be distinguished from nature.

V. The doubt however is whether, with knowledge of this mystery removed, this distinction between subsistence and nature is deduced from the principles of nature. For many consider that Aristotle did not know the distinction of the supposit from nature, but that nature itself is what operates; for although he said that the soul does not build nor grow angry but the man, he nowhere said this of humanity, nor did he say that actions are of supposits but of singulars — that is, that they are concerned with singulars; for in that sense he spoke there in VII Metaphysics.

VI. Nevertheless, even if this matter is not of great moment, yet as to what concerns the philosopher — that he himself distinguished the supposit from nature and attributed actions to supposits and not only to singulars — Saint Thomas expressly holds this; for in Quodl. 2, a. 4, he says: "That the philosopher raises this question — whether the supposit is the same as the essence or nature — in VII Metaphysics, text 21, where he inquires whether each thing and its quiddity are the same; and he determines that in those things which are said per se, the thing and the quiddity of the thing are the same, whereas in those things which are said per accidens they are not the same; for a man is nothing other than what the quiddity of man is, since man signifies nothing other than a two-footed walking animal; but a white thing is

not entirely the same as what the quiddity of white is — namely what is signified by the name white — for white signifies nothing except a quality, as is said in the Categories, while a white thing is a substance having a quality. According to this therefore, in whatever thing something can be accidental that is not of its nature, in it the thing and the quiddity differ — that is, the supposit and the nature." So Saint Thomas. He therefore holds that the philosopher distinguished the supposit from nature only in those things which are said per se and essentially, so that they do not include any accident; but he did make the distinction if some nature or substance receives accidents. Also the philosopher, in the chapter on substance, says: "That it is proper to substance in the fourth mode to receive contraries, or to underlie accidents." Therefore this fact of being subsistent or subsisting is outside the quiddity of substance, since it is a property of it. Similarly Saint Thomas understood that according to the philosopher, actions are of supposits, when he says in III, q. 20, a. 1, ad 2: "That acting is not attributed to nature as to the agent, but to the person, for acts are of supposits and of singulars according to the philosopher." Therefore Saint Thomas understood that when the philosopher said that actions are of singulars, he was speaking of supposits.

VII. The argument of the philosopher also shows the same thing: for in V Metaphysics, text 27, he says that a form is not generated but the composite, because the composite is a this-something; where by this-something he attributes a special singularity both to the composite and to the form or matter. Now this singularity of the composite is the singularity of subsistence or of the supposit; for singularity commonly so called, as found in form and nature, is not the singularity that constitutes the terminus of generation; but for generation there is required that singularity of the composite by which it is said to be a this-something. For the philosopher says that not the form is generated but the composite, because the composite is a this-something; therefore some special singularity is found by the philosopher in the composite itself which is not in the form — namely the singularity which can

be called a this-something; yet not only the partial form — for example, the soul — but also the total form — for example, humanity — has singularity, and is not a this-something, because nature — for example, humanity — is that by which a man is this-something; for it is that by which a man is a man, just as whiteness is that by which something is white. Therefore the singularity of humanity is not the singularity by which something is called a this-something, but is like the singularity of a form or soul. Therefore beyond the singularity of nature — for example, of humanity — Aristotle acknowledges another special singularity by which something is called a this-something or a supposit; and this suffices for something to be said to be generated, which does not suffice for a form, because a form, as he says there, is not generated; therefore neither is humanity, which stands as a form, such that it is not a this-something. Hence we further gather that when Aristotle says in De Anima I, text 64, that the soul neither builds nor grows angry but the man, the very same must be said of humanity, because the same reasoning runs, since humanity is the form by which a man is a man, just as the soul is that by which an animated being is animated; and the reason the soul does not build but the man does is because it is that by which a man is constituted; therefore similarly it will not be said that humanity builds, but the man, because humanity is that by which a man is a man and that by which he is a this-something, and so it will not belong to it to act or operate except as a quo, just as it belongs to the soul to operate as a quo. It remains therefore that neither a total form is a supposit, nor is singularity given in those things in the same way as in the supposit, even though forms are in truth singular and individual, because form is singular as a quo, while the supposit is singular as a quod.

VIII. This much for Aristotle. As for the matter itself, it is commonly established among all that subsistence is distinguished from nature; but it is not so established, nor is it easy to explain the arguments by which Saint Thomas proved it. Now there are two: the first is for composites of matter

and form, the second is universal for every created nature even if it lacks physical matter, as is the case with angels. Saint Thomas uses the first argument in the present question, article 3. He uses the second in Quodl. 2, a. 4, and in III, q. 2, a. 2. And the first argument is founded on this inference: that in composites of matter and form the principles of individuation and individuation itself are not of the intrinsic concept of the quiddity; therefore the terminus and complement of such individuation is also not the same as the nature and quiddity, but is distinguished from it. The consequence is proved because subsistence and suppositality express individuation as complete and terminated; for as Saint Thomas notes in III, q. 2, a. 3, ad 2, and I, q. 29, a. 1, ad 2, and in many other places, a hypostasis or supposit signifies a particular substance not in any way whatsoever but as it is in its complement; and so it does not belong to a part but to the whole, and therefore subsistence imports the individuation of substance as complete and terminated. Therefore in that nature in which individuation and its principles are outside the nature, the terminus or complement of such individuation is also distinguished from it, nor can it pertain to the concept of the nature, but is outside it, and yet really belongs to it; therefore in reality there is something distinct and superadded to it. Just as similarly the being of existence is posited by Saint Thomas as distinct from essence, as we shall say below, because it really belongs to essence and not as an intrinsic but as a contingent predicate, and therefore as something distinct. Now the antecedent — namely that the principles of individuation and individuation itself are outside the concept of material nature — is often affirmed by Saint Thomas; for in a human being these flesh and these bones, such as are found in Peter for example, are not of the concept and quiddity of man as such, otherwise they would also belong to Paul and other individuals. Hence in material natures we see individuals multiplied substantially and not quidditatively and essentially; therefore such multipliable individuation and the principles from which it is taken must be outside the concept and quiddity of nature, as we have set out more fully following the mind of Saint Thomas in the book De Generatione, q. 9, a. 3

and 4. And so it is established that just as individuating principles are outside the concept and quiddity of material nature, so too is the terminus and complement of individuation, which is subsistence.

IX. The second argument of Saint Thomas proceeds generally for every created nature, even if in it the individuating principles are not distinguished from the formal principles of the nature and species, as is the case in angels. And it is founded on the office of sustaining and underlying accidents, which properly belongs to substance by reason of its being substance. The inference therefore consists in this: that the sustentation and ordering toward such accidents does not pertain to the quiddity of nature; therefore that by reason of which nature is rendered underlying and sustaining and receiving these extrinsic accidents must be outside the quiddity and nature of substance as the terminus and complement of it. And the force of this inference rests on the fact that substance capable of accidents cannot receive them and unite them in the very formal nature of the nature and within its concept, because by the very fact that they are united as accidents, they must be united as unmixed and unconfused with the substantial nature itself — since accidents can change and be removed while the nature itself remains unchanged. Therefore it is necessary that there be given something outside the quiddity of such a nature as a third in which the substantial nature and the accident itself are received and sustained without confusion and mixture.

X. This inference has seemed very difficult to many, especially to Father Suárez, Disp. 34 Met., sect. 3, n. 13, and he places the difficulty in this: that those accidents of which the nature is capable are not that by which the supposit is distinguished from nature — since subsistence is not constituted through accidents. Therefore antecedently to accidents the supposit is distinguished from nature. How then is the argument taken from the distinction of accidents to the distinction of the supposit from nature, unless perhaps it proceeds by way of similarity — because just as accidents are

outside the concept of the quiddity of substance and yet belong to it, so similarly does subsistence? But the inference of Saint Thomas is not founded on the fact that the supposit is constituted through accidents, nor on similarity alone or on an indication — as though the very fact that nature is capable of accidents outside its concept means that it must also have subsistence which is outside the nature; for such an inference does not appear, nor does it rest on any parity. Rather the force of the inference rests principally on this: that accidents and nature are united to one another unconfusedly and unmixedly; therefore they must necessarily be united in some third which underlies both and receives both, and this must be outside the concept of nature. And the reason is that there are only two ways in which one thing can be united to another: either because it becomes one with it immediately, or because it is united with it in some third, as Saint Thomas says in III Sent., d. 5, q. 3, a. 1, ad 5. But an accident cannot be united to nature in the first way; therefore only in the second. The minor is proved because nature under the concept of nature only expresses that by which something is such — for example, humanity is that by which a man is a man — and so it is conceived in the manner of a form and is signified as a quo. But when another form, which is an accident, is united to it, it cannot be compared to that accident in the manner of a form but in the manner of what is receptive and sustaining of it, since it is accidentally informed by it. Therefore that nature must be considered under another mode — that is, not under that mode of standing as a quo but under another mode and termination of standing as a quod — and this mode or termination, since it regards not only quidditative and constitutive predicates but also extrinsic and accidental ones under which it subsists, must not be a constitutive predicate of the nature nor one pertaining to its constitution, but one making nature capable of receiving extrinsic predicates, because to receive extrinsic things does not pertain to the constitution of nature nor is it to receive the constitutive predicates themselves, but that which is outside the constitutive predicates. Therefore to receive extrinsic things in this way does not pertain to

nature itself according to the concept and quiddity of nature, but under a mode and termination not pertaining to the quiddity — namely under the aspect of sustaining others — and for this reason the philosopher places the receiving of contraries among the properties of substance and not among quidditative predicates.

XI. You will say: accidents also can receive their own proper passions and be the medium of receiving other accidents, as quantity is the medium of receiving qualities and potency is the ground of receiving acts. Second, you will press against subsistence itself, which is something distinct from nature and yet is received immediately in nature; therefore for receiving something extrinsic or distinct, nothing beyond nature is required. And conversely, divine subsistence is not distinguished from nature and yet immediately terminates an extraneous nature; therefore something distinct from nature is not required for terminating. Third, granted all this, the argument made still does not conclude that subsistence is distinguished from nature, but only that it is not of the essential concept of nature; for it is perfectly possible that something be identified with something else, or not be distinguished from it, and yet not be of the concept of it — just as rational is identified with animal in man and yet is not of the concept of animal.

XII. To the first it is replied that accidents do not receive other accidents as a subsistent and as a quod, but as a medium and as a quo; for substance itself stands as a quod and as subsistent; thus accidents only dispose substance and provide a medium for receiving others — not for sustaining them — when there are several that are to be received in an ordered way, one after another. This is the solution of Saint Thomas in I-II, q. 7, a. 1, ad 3.

XIII. To the second it is replied that subsistence properly is not received in nature as accidents are, but is a mode of substantial nature rendering it terminated and incommunicable, so that nature itself can be rendered subsistent and sustaining others. Nor is it repugnant that such a mode and

termination, even though it does not pertain to the concept of nature, should nevertheless immediately come to it, because it is its complement and termination; and even though it does not constitute nature, it nonetheless completes nature in the nature of a terminus, and for this reason nature directly regards it as the complement of its genus and not as something entirely extraneous to itself. But accidents do not pertain to the complement of nature, nor do they terminate it in its own proper and substantial being, but superadd a new and different being. Hence the substantial nature cannot immediately be ordered to receive such being in the nature itself under the concept of nature, but only by means of something that is outside the concept of nature. Indeed even for receiving the very substantial being of existence — since it belongs accidentally and not quidditatively — nature cannot receive it immediately under the concept of nature, but under the concept of subsisting determinately and as a quod, as will be said later. There is an analogy in substance itself insofar as it is operative: for because operation is a certain actuality belonging accidentally to a created operating being, it therefore cannot be immediately ordered to operation, but only by means of a potency, which is an accident superadded to substance; yet substance is itself immediately capable of that potency and it flows immediately from substance, which stands as an instrument completing substance in the operative genus. To what is said about divine subsistence it is replied that it is not distinguished from the divine nature, because in God nothing extraneous is received, nor anything having a different being; but that the divine subsistence can terminate an alien nature — this is not to receive something coming to the divine nature but to supply the role of a proper supposit by terminating the created nature; for this it is not required that it be distinguished from the divine nature, but from the created nature which it terminates, by reason of the infinite eminence it has for supplying the force of the proper supposit.

XIV. To the third it is replied from the doctrine of Saint Thomas, Quodl. 2, a. 4, ad 1, that something can be accidental to a thing beyond its nature in two

ways. In one way because it does not fall within the definition of the thing but nevertheless essentially determines and contracts it, and so, even though it does not constitute the thing in itself, it nonetheless constitutes some essence together with it, because it determines the higher grade. In another way something is said to be accidental to a thing because it neither essentially constitutes it nor constitutes some third thing together with it through essential determination. In the first way it is perfectly possible that something be said to be accidental to a thing insofar as it is not of its quiddity and yet be said to be identified with it — just as rational is identified with animal even though it does not constitute it, yet because it essentially determines and contracts it, it can be identified with it in some third thing which they constitute; and consequently also with one another, because things that are the same as some third thing are the same as one another. But things that are accidental in the second way cannot be identified; rather it is necessary that there be something distinct either really or modally; and in this way subsistence stands with respect to nature, and similarly existence — because they neither essentially constitute the nature nor essentially contract and determine it so that some essential third thing is constituted, but they come to the constituted thing having all constitutive predicates, as is evident in Christ the Lord, in whom there is the entire and integral human nature and everything pertaining to its species and grade not less than in other men, and yet He does not have subsistence; therefore subsistence does not pertain to constituting the essence nor to essentially determining it.

Second Difficulty.

XV. Concerning the second difficulty the matter was once greatly controverted, because it bore on what formally constitutes a person or supposit, and what it adds above nature. On this matter Cajetan in III, q. 4, a. 2, Father Suárez in the cited Disp. 34 Met., Master Medina in III, q. 4, a. 2, and Báñez in I, q. 3, a. 3, report and treat at length seven opinions. In q. 7

Physics we cited only the two more famous ones: the first of those who say it is something positive, the second of those who say it is something negative. And the latter we rejected, while the former we established. But concerning what this positive thing is, we did not explain there, because the matter is more metaphysical and theological, and it sufficed to touch on it briefly there. Now therefore we say that all those opinions reduce to three principal ones. The first: that the supposit only adds above nature a negation of actual or aptitudinal dependence on another of which it would be a part or an inhering form — for subsistence denies inherence and denies being a part.

XVI. The second principal opinion acknowledges that subsistence adds something positive above nature, but is divided into two further opinions. For some explain this positive element not through something absolute and intrinsically belonging to the substance itself, but through the connotation of something extrinsic to which it stands in relation — such that subsistence is the very nature insofar as it connotes or stands in relation to extrinsic things which it receives, whether this be existence itself — which in the view of Saint Thomas is distinguished from essence — or the accidents or operations which are required for or follow upon existence. For this reason it seems we can interpret Saint Thomas when he takes the distinction of the supposit from nature through the fact that the supposit is capable of accidents, whereas nature is not as such.

XVII. The third and final opinion says that subsistence adds something real and absolute intrinsically affecting the substance, and it is commonly held to be a certain substantial mode or ultimate terminus of substance — although Cajetan in the cited place in III and Ferrariensis in Contra Gent. IV, c. 43, attribute to others the view that it is a reality distinct from nature and existence, of which we shall speak presently.

XVIII. Presupposing therefore that subsistence does not add only a negation of dependence above nature — as we showed in the cited q. 7 Physics — the

resolution in the present place is that subsistence adds above nature not only some connotation or relation to an extrinsic thing, but something positive intrinsically denominating the substance itself; and it is more probable to me that it is a substantial mode than some reality distinct from substance as a thing from a thing. This is the more common opinion among authors at present, especially Thomists; on which Cajetan, Ferrariensis, Báñez, Medina as cited, Alvarez in I, disp. 23, Suárez in the cited Disp. 34 Met., sect. 4, and others may be consulted.

XIX. The first part of this conclusion is deduced from the fact that all those connotations or relations to extrinsic things presuppose nature as already incommunicable and ultimately terminated in itself — since it stands in relation to those extrinsic things not as placed outside itself but as received in itself — and nature could not receive them unmixedly and unconfusedly with itself unless the recipient had incommunicability, by reason of which all those extrinsic forms would be received without confusion with nature, and in such a way that they would not be further communicated to another subject or subsistent. Therefore the relation or connotation to extrinsic things to be received in itself is the relation and regard of an ultimately terminated and incommunicable subject toward another sustaining it or subsisting under it; therefore it already presupposes the nature as subsisting. And so nature and the supposit cannot differ through a mere diverse connotation and relation to diverse extrinsic connotated things, or from a merely different mode of signifying the same thing. The consequence is proved because either such relation and connotation is founded immediately in nature itself according to the concept of nature, or in something superadded to it. If in something superadded, then besides the extrinsic connotated things there is something superadded in the nature itself by reason of which it has that relation to such connotated things. If nothing is superadded, then nature from itself and from its proper concept of nature regards those extrinsic things — which is to regard them as proper passions — and so the supposit would be constituted

only in the ordering to proper passions; indeed the very nature according to the concept of nature will be the supposit, if it founds from itself that relation and connotation in which the supposit is said to consist. Hence it further follows that since in Christ human nature exists according to the entire concept of nature and has a relation to proper passions and to extrinsic accidents joined to it and had in it, that nature will be called a supposit and a person — and therefore there will be two persons in Christ, which is against the faith.

XX. But if it is said that the humanity of Christ in the view of Saint Thomas lacks its own proper existence and consequently does not stand in relation to it, and that the principal relation and extrinsic connotation of subsistence is with respect to existence — because it constitutes substance as existing through itself — and secondarily it stands in relation to accidents; and so since the humanity of Christ lacks the connotation and relation to its own proper existence, it also lacks its own proper personality. Against this, however: First, because in this way something certain according to faith will be founded on something very uncertain — namely that nature stands in immediate relation to existence, and yet lacks it in Christ notwithstanding that nature stands in immediate relation to it. For the reason Saint Thomas denied to the humanity of Christ its own proper existence in III, q. 17, a. 2 is that he considers nature not to be immediately capable of existence but the supposit; but if nature were immediately capable of it, it would in no way lack its own existence in the Person of the Word. Second, because standing in the doctrine of Saint Thomas, in that thing there is a relation and capacity for extrinsic predicates and connotated things in which the actual reception of such predicates is found; and it is established that existence and accidents are received in the very subject in which they are sustained, not by means of an extrinsic denomination or connotation but really and intrinsically; therefore in the same subject there must be the capacity and ordination toward such extrinsic things, and so that capacity and ordination must intrinsically belong to it, just

as the reception itself belongs to it. But according to Saint Thomas, nature alone did not give this capacity or that relation, but the hypostasis or supposit; and so it is not given in nature without the supposit — just as the human nature in Christ is not capable of a created existence according to Saint Thomas, nor of a created filiation, as he teaches in III, q. 35, a. 5, ad 1. Therefore what the hypostasis adds above nature is not a mere extrinsic connotation but something really and intrinsically belonging to that subject to which it intrinsically belongs to receive existence and other accidents.

XXI. Therefore the supposit intrinsically and really belongs to the substance itself, for it posits a formal effect in it insofar as it renders it terminated and subsisting or sustaining those things which are received in it; and this sustentation and reception does not belong to substance through a mere connotation or extrinsic denomination but through an intrinsic belonging or denomination.

XXII. The second part of the conclusion — namely that what subsistence adds above nature is a mode and not a distinct reality — is not entirely certain even among Thomists. For some of the more ancient said it is a mode, such as Vitoria, Soto, and others; and Báñez in the cited place and Medina consider it probable, even though they themselves hold the opposite, citing Cajetan in their favor. Cajetan however, in the cited place in III, in the first and second corollary on the identity and inseparability of this terminus or subsistence from nature, says that this terminus is in some way the same and in some way not the same — just as a terminus is terminating as quasi the same and quasi not the same: for it is something of the thing, namely its terminus, and yet is not that thing, as is evident of a point and a line. And Cajetan adds that nature can be made without its terminus in act, but not conversely. All of which are signs of a modal distinction. And in this question 2, a. 2, he says more expressly that subsistence and nature are not distinguished by the distinction between a thing and a thing. It is also the express view of Saint

Thomas who in q. 9 De Potentia, a. 1, ad 1, says: "That being is a mode of existing in a singular substance," and in a. 2: "Person, he says, signifies nature with a certain mode of existing, which mode is to be existing through itself." The same is taken from I Sent., d. 23, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2, and I, q. 30, ad 1, where he says: "An indeterminate individual signifies nature with a determinate mode of being which belongs to singulars — namely to be subsisting through itself." And ad 2 he says: "That the very mode of existing incommunicably can be common to many." Whether the individual principles from which this mode is taken are really distinct in material things but not in spiritual ones, we shall say below.

XXIII. The reason is what we said in q. 7 Physics, a. 1: that subsistence stands as the termination of substance; hence it follows that subsistence is not given as an extreme that composes, but as the very termination or completed totality resulting from the composition or constitution of all the parts or predicates of substance. Therefore it must not stand as a reality but as a mode; for it gives a certain state or mode of being to the thing it affects — just as a point, when it terminates a line, the very terminating is a modifying, and to be terminated is nothing other than being thus modified so as not to extend further or compose with another but to rest there. But it is repugnant that what stands as a formal terminus, or the ground of terminating, in some composition should be a reality and not a mode; for what stands as a reality must compose with that to which it is joined, so that from them some whole results per se or per accidens; whereas the very nature of totality or termination — or, if I may so say, of ultimation — cannot stand as the ultimate nature and termination of a composite; therefore it cannot be a composing reality but a mode resulting from the composition or from the integrity of the whole. But if it were to result as a reality, it would again have to be united and compose with the thing it affects; for this is the difference between a reality and a mode: a reality is joined to another through a union with it, whereas a mode modifies

through itself and is identified with the reality or thing of which it is a mode, since it does not differ really from it.

XXIV. Hence if what stands as terminus and as the ultimate termination were a reality, it would have to be united to the thing it terminates, and from that there would result another whole and another termination — and not a whole per accidens, because the union of subsistence is not accidental but substantial and per se, as is evident in the union of the humanity with the Word. Therefore another termination and ultimation would have to result from such a union and composition, and so there would be a process to infinity — which is in no way to be admitted, especially in per se composites, such as substantial ones, to which subsistence itself belongs.

XXV. That subsistence is the ultimate complement or terminus of substance is manifestly established, because a person or hypostasis signifies the most complete and incommunicable thing — for it is opposed to the nature of a part and to the nature of what inheres — which cannot be unless it expresses termination and ultimation in the genus of substance; and for this reason it is said to be existing through itself and subsisting and underlying, as though ultimately resting beneath all things; on which Saint Thomas may be consulted in III Sent., d. 5, q. 3, a. 3. Therefore it must express the mode of the very totality and termination, not a superadded reality; for a reality stands rather as composing than as the very termination of the composite or whole. And it is confirmed because whole and wholly differ, and so do thing and mode: for the word wholly imports the mode of totality, whereas the thing itself is the thing or substance; but suppositality or subsistence says the whole as wholly or incommunicably disposed. Therefore it adds above substance not a reality but a mode of the thing — namely to stand wholly or in the manner of a whole. And it is confirmed secondly because being a part or being an inhering thing imports a mode and not a reality distinct above the very nature of the part or accident; for an accident does not need a distinct reality for

inhering, nor does a part for being in a partial mode. Therefore neither does a whole, for standing totally and terminatively, need a reality but a mode, because it stands in an opposed mode to the part and to what inheres. Finally, the common axiom supports this: that realities are not to be multiplied without cause, nor in immaterial things should any distinction other than a modal one be posited between subsistence and substance. And in the divine persons, personality is conceived as a mode — for they are said to pertain to the essence as a mode, not as a constituting reality.

XXVI. Finally, from this the mystery of the Incarnation is most excellently understood, in which the Word assumed the human nature by rendering it not terminated by itself but terminated by another — quasi excluding that termination by the fact that the human nature was drawn to the terminus and totality of another as though it were a part of it. Just as we see that in order for some line or surface that was terminated by its own points to be placed under an alien terminus, it suffices for it to be united and continued with another — for in this way it is rendered quasi its part — so the divine Word excluded the mode of termination from human nature by rendering it quasi a part of the Word, which stands as a total and integral person; and so human nature lost its own proper termination and was terminated by an alien substantial terminus. On this Saint Thomas may be consulted in III Sent. ad Annibald, d. 5, a. 2, ad 3, and Opusc. 2, c. 211; nor was God becoming man anything other than the human nature — which of itself demanded to exist in an integral and total mode, as being a substance — being impeded from its proper termination and being united to another or to the Person.

XXVII. But you will object: if subsistence is a mode, then it is not entitatively and really distinguished from the substance of which it is a mode; therefore the entire personality and created subsistence would remain in the human nature entitatively and really, even if not formally — which seems very harsh and contrary to the mystery of the Incarnation, since in Christ there is in no

way a created personality. Second, because the supposit and nature are related as what includes and what is included — since the supposit includes nature as the composite includes the part — therefore they must be really and not modally distinguished, just as other things that are related as including and included — for example, the whole with respect to form or matter — for the whole is really distinguished from each part. Third, because Saint Thomas in III, q. 4, a. 2, says: "That if the person were preunderstood before the assumption, it would necessarily be corrupted by the assumption itself;" and in the same place, a. 1, ad 3, he says: "That a pre-existing angel could not be assumed into the unity of the divine Person unless its personality were destroyed." Therefore personality is some real entity; otherwise it would not be destroyed but would remain, since the thing with which it is identified remains. Also in I Sent., d. 25, q. 1, a. 1, ad 3, he says: "That in composites nature has a real difference from person, in that something is added to nature." Therefore it differs as a thing from a thing.

XXVIII. To the first it is replied that in Christ nothing of created personality remains, because that entire mode of terminating and subsisting in itself is destroyed and another termination of subsisting in another succeeds; hence in the formality of the mode nothing remains, even though the entity remains that was the root of such a mode and with which the mode is identified. Nor is there any other account of the definition of modes, because when one mode succeeds another, one is entirely destroyed in the very formal entity of the mode — as is evident when one figure is lost and another succeeds it, one location and another succeeds it, and so with other modes. Nor is it necessary that the proper personality or subsistence of human nature should cease in any other manner than the manner in which one figure ceases when another comes, and one location when another comes — even though the real entity with which they are identified, that is, from which reality they are not distinguished, remains.

XXIX. To the second we admit that the supposit and nature are related as what includes and what is included; but the word including can be taken in two ways. First, for the whole itself as to entity and substance, and in this sense it is the composite and is compared to the included part as really distinct from it by reason of the other part joined to it. Second, for the whole itself as to the very mode of totality and ultimation and incommunicability, and in this sense it is the supposit and is compared to the nature itself as a superadded mode, not as really distinct. Thus the whole taken for the very thing composed of parts and including them is really distinguished from one part by reason of the other included part. But the whole taken for the mode of totality and of ultimate termination includes the parts as a terminating mode, not as a really distinct reality.

XXX. To the last it is said that proper personality placed by assumption to another person is corrupted in the way in which a modal entity can be corrupted — as wine's location is corrupted when another comes, and one figure when another comes — and not as a really distinct reality. And in the last passage Saint Thomas speaks of the addition according to reality not on the part of subsistence itself, but on the part of the individuating principles from which it is caused; and these in material things superadd something of reality beyond nature, namely signed matter. Or secondly, Saint Thomas speaks of the real difference of nature from person, not as a real difference of a thing from a thing, but as a real modal difference.

Third Difficulty.

XXXI. Concerning the argument of Saint Thomas in this third article there is a great difficulty, because he seems expressly to teach that in every substance lacking matter the supposit is not distinguished from nature. For these are the express words of Saint Thomas: "In those things that are not composed of matter and form, in which individuation is not through individuating matter but the forms themselves are individuated through themselves, it is necessary

that the forms themselves be subsistent supposits. Hence in them the supposit and the nature do not differ." From which words it openly follows that angels, since they are not composed of matter and form, consequently have in them no difference between nature and supposit; and yet the opposite of this is certain and asserted by Saint Thomas both in Quodl. 2, a. 4, and because he says in I, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3, that the Word could have assumed an angelic nature just as a human one; and so he openly presupposes that the supposit and nature are distinguished in angels, otherwise he could not assume it with the proper supposit destroyed.

XXXII. For this reason the doctrine of this article has seemed difficult, especially because Saint Thomas delivers it also in other places, not only speaking in a general way about immaterial nature — for in that case we could interpret him of a nature that is wholly immaterial, such as pure act — but speaking specifically of angels, he says that in them the supposit and nature are not distinguished; as in q. 7 De Potentia, a. 4: "In angels, he says, each supposit is its own nature." And in Contra Gent. IV, c. 55, ad 4, he expressly teaches: "That human nature was more fittingly assumed than angelic, because in a man nature is one thing and person another, since he is composed of matter and form, but not so in an angel, because it is immaterial." This passage presses greatly and does not admit the interpretation already intimated — that when Saint Thomas does not distinguish the supposit from nature in immaterial things, he speaks only of immaterial nature which is God — since he expressly speaks in these passages of an angel. Nor does he speak only of the principles of individuation, which are certainly not distinguished from the nature itself in an angel though they are in corporeal natures. For it is established that he speaks expressly of the personality and subsistence of the angel itself, since he speaks of the angel as assumable by the divine Person, and he denies that the angelic nature can be assumed because it is not distinguished from the supposit; therefore he is not speaking of the principles of individuation or of the individuation of the nature, because these are

assumable, but it is personality alone that is repugnant to being assumed both in angels and in us.

XXXIII. From which consideration the solution of many authors is rejected, who consider that Saint Thomas in the present question, a. 3, when he says that in immaterial things nature and the supposit are not distinguished, is speaking of the principles of individuation from which subsistence arises — principles which are not distinguished in immaterial things from the form or nature itself, even though subsistence itself is distinguished from the individuated nature. This interpretation is followed by Father Suárez, Disp. 34 Met., sect. 3, n. 17; Arrubal here, disp. 10, c. 1; Alvarez in III, disp. 3; and it is taken from Cajetan in the present place, who teaches that when it is asked whether God is His own nature, the word God is not taken for the person or supposit but for the concrete individual common to the three Persons. But this solution cannot stand with the passage we cited from Contra Gent. IV, where he speaks specifically of the angelic nature, which he says could not be assumed because in it the supposit and nature are not distinguished as in a man; therefore he is not speaking of the individuating principles but of subsistence itself, because this alone is incapable of being assumed. Besides, in the present text he expressly names the supposit, saying that the supposit and nature do not differ in immaterial substances. Therefore it is badly explained as being about the principle of individuation. The author of the Golden Table in the Concordances, dub. 114, brings other solutions that reduce to diverse considerations of nature in the concrete and in the abstract, physically, metaphysically, and logically, according to intrinsic or extrinsic constitutives, and says that according to one consideration it differs from the supposit and not according to another — which may be seen there at greater length.

XXXIV. We therefore, in order to elicit the mind of Saint Thomas from his own words, presuppose that subsistence does not arise from nature according to specific principles but according to individuating and singular principles;

hence subsistence originatively imports the principles of individuation, while formally it is a terminus or a certain mode affecting the singular nature and completing it. For it is established that subsistence is the complement and terminus of nature rendering it incommunicable; and so it belongs neither to nature in the universal but in the singular, nor as a quidditative predicate of nature — because both quiddity according to constitutive predicates and nature in the universal import communicability. And in Christ there is nature according to all quidditative predicates and according to singularity, but not according to subsistence. Therefore Saint Thomas sometimes takes the supposit or subsistence formally only for the terminus completing nature, and sometimes also for the individuating principles from which that terminus of subsistence originates. And when he speaks in the first way, he teaches that subsistence is distinguished from nature even in immaterial things. But when he takes subsistence together with the individuating principles, he teaches that nature and the supposit do not differ in immaterial things though they do in material ones — at least as to the terminus, even though in material things they also differ as to the individuating principles. For in immaterial things those principles are not distinguished from the form itself, which through itself is rendered incommunicable; whereas in material things they superadd something to matter in order for it to be individuated and distinguished from another in the same species, as was declared in the book De Generatione, q. 9. Thus in sum, the supposit is sometimes taken formally, sometimes radically or originatively. And in angels the origin or root of the supposit is not distinguished from nature, though subsistence itself formally is — that is, the terminus arising from the individuating principles. In material natures, however, not only the formal but also the radical subsistence is distinguished from nature, because the individuating principles which are its root superadd something to nature in material things. But in God neither radically nor formally is the supposit distinguished from nature, because it pertains to His quiddity even as considered in the abstract, from which personality is not distinguished in reality but only according to our consideration.

XXXV. And that this is the legitimate mind of Saint Thomas is established, because in this first part, q. 29, a. 2, ad 3, he says: "That person or hypostasis adds above the nature the individuating principles, and are not the same in composites of matter and form, as was said above when treating of divine simplicity." Which is in this third question, article three, where Saint Thomas clearly explains himself: that in that question he spoke of person or supposit as including the individuating principles and not only the nature of the completing terminus, and he compared it to nature according to the quidditative concept as anteceding the individuating principles; and in that concept of nature he acknowledges only in God that the supposit and nature do not differ, while in the remaining creatures they do differ — at least as to the nature of the terminus — although in material things they also differ as to the individuating principles. Hence in III, q. 17, a. 1: "Nature, he says, considered as such as it is signified in the abstract, cannot truly be predicated of the supposit or person except in God, in whom that by which He is and that which He is do not differ, as was treated in the first part." Hence the sense of Saint Thomas in this place in the first part is understood as follows: that in God nature itself even as considered in the abstract does not differ from the supposit, and so it is verified of God in a special manner that the supposit and nature do not differ — which is not verified of other creatures even immaterial ones, because it is not so in God that it can be predicated of nature itself even as considered in the abstract. In truth however, Saint Thomas does not deny that in angels the supposit and nature differ on the part of the thing, as in Quodl. 2, a. 4, where he disputes and resolves this ex professo, and in III, q. 4, a. 2, ad 3, where he teaches that an angel could not be assumed into the unity of the divine Person unless its personality were destroyed — and so he presupposes that the angelic nature can be assumed with its personality destroyed.

XXXVI. Therefore when the holy Doctor affirms in the present place that in those things that do not consist of matter and form the supposit and nature

do not differ, he speaks of the supposit not only formally for the very terminating mode, but also radically and originatively insofar as it includes the individuating principles; for immaterial things, being simple forms, do not have any whole resulting from parts, nor have the very nature of individuation and separation of one from another from something superadded to the constitution of the whole — as is the case in material things with signed or designated matter. And wherever Saint Thomas denies that the supposit is really distinguished in angels, he speaks of the supposit not for the very formal termination of the subsistent alone, but also radically for subsistence itself as originated and rooted in the individuating principles. Nor is it repugnant that from some nature which is a simple form — and not pure act but including some potentiality, and consequently having a dependence on the extrinsic and a relation toward accidents — there should result some mode distinct from nature by which it is rendered subsistent terminatively and formally; and even though it lacks physical matter it does not lack potentiality, which stands in place of matter in angelic nature; and so it is always verified that individuation or the supposit is taken from matter or from something that stands in place of matter — namely from the nature itself as potential, that is, as founding the aptitude for receiving and underlying. And Saint Thomas testifies to this in I Sent., d. 34, q. 1, a. 1: "That in those things in which essence is other than the supposit and hypostasis, there must be something material through which the common nature is individuated and determined to this singular; hence in creatures the hypostasis adds above the essence and nature the determination of matter, or of something that stands in place of matter. Hence these are not entirely the same in creatures." Where, since the holy Doctor acknowledges that it suffices for determining nature to the hypostasis or subsistence not only through matter but also through something that stands in place of matter, he manifestly posits in angels a sufficient principle for distinguishing the supposit from nature — even though that which stands in place of matter for individuating is not distinguished from the form and nature itself.

XXXVII. To the passages cited from Contra Gent. III and q. 7 De Potentia it is replied that in that passage of Contra Gent., if Saint Thomas were of the view that subsistence in an angel is not distinguished at all as capable of being assumed, he would not say that it was more fitting for human nature rather than angelic to be assumed, but that the opposite would be impossible — namely to assume the angelic — yet he does not say this, but only that it was more fitting; therefore he presupposed both to be possible, as indeed he asserts in the places cited above, especially in I, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3. Thus he only adduces the greater fittingness on the part of human nature, because in it the supposit is distinguished from nature also radically and in its principle; and so the assumption appears more fitting where there is a greater distinction, at least on the part of the root and principle. And so both in that place and in the other cited from q. 7 De Potentia, and in any other places where he denies the distinction between the supposit and nature in immaterial things, he speaks of the supposit radically and not only formally — that is, as it is held from the part of the principle of individuation — just as if we were to say that passions taken radically are not distinguished from nature, though they are formally.

ARTICLE TWO.
Whether subsistence is indivisible and not composite, and receptive of existence.

We treated the difficulties of this question in q. 7 Physics. In order to treat them briefly, however, we shall first show that subsistence is the ground of receiving existence, and then we shall treat of its indivisibility in the manner of a terminus, which belongs to all subsistences.

I. That subsistence is the ground of receiving existence, and so that it belongs to nature prior to its existence, is beyond doubt in the view of Saint Thomas, who distinguishes existence from essence and attributes it to the supposit as to what exists as a quod — such that subsistence is the terminus of nature first

and through itself and antecedently to existence. This can be established from two things. First, because subsistence from its own formal nature is more intimate to nature than existence is; for subsistence is caused from the very totality or incommunicability itself as pertaining to the complement of substance, and so it is not so contingent a predicate as existence, because existence comes entirely from without — namely from the very action of the agent — such that the ground of belonging is the action itself which places the thing outside causes; whereas subsistence has its foundation and ground of belonging in the nature itself, even though in order to be actually outside causes it requires the action of an agent, since substance of itself demands to be completed by the complement of subsistence, given that by its nature it is a being existing through itself. Hence more intrinsically, through itself, and prior does subsistence belong to substance than does any passion, which is an accident — since subsistence is not in another category from substance but is reduced to it as its complement and mode; and it is prior and more intimate to substance to be completed in its substantial entity as to the mode of subsisting through itself than to be adorned and affected by accidents, which are proper passions, in the ordering toward operating or other accidental offices. Yet substance has a greater connection with its proper passions than with existence, because with its proper passions it founds a necessary connection of eternal truth, whereas with existence it cannot found such a connection. Therefore if subsistence belongs prior and more intimately than proper passions, a fortiori it will belong prior and more intimately than existence. Nor does it stand in the way that subsistence can be removed from nature whereas passions cannot. For against this: even proper passions can be separated as to actual belonging, even though they always and necessarily belong to nature as to aptitude; and in the same way proper subsistence, even though it does not actually belong to the humanity of Christ, they nevertheless have an intrinsic aptitude toward it. And just as in quantity the termination through an indivisible — from which figure results — is understood prior to actual inherence, for quantity remains in the Eucharist

terminated but not inhering; so in substance it is prior for it to be terminated through its own subsistence than for it to be actually existent. Thus subsistence immediately results from the very union of parts insofar as they constitute a whole, and from the very individuation of substance insofar as it is substantial, because it is its complement and terminus; whereas existence does not result from the intrinsic nature of substance or its individuation, but only from the action of the agent, because existence constitutes the thing in the achieved state of being outside causes; therefore the ground of belonging is more intimate in subsistence than in existence, as has been said.

II. Second, this is taken from Saint Thomas, who perpetually teaches that existence does not belong to nature except through the medium of the supposit, such that even though nature is the principle quo, it is not rendered capable of receiving existence as a quod unless it is suppositized — as may be seen in Saint Thomas, Quodl. 9, a. 3, and III, q. 17, a. 2, and in III Sent. ad Annibald, d. 6, q. unica, a. 2, ad 2, where he says: "That properly speaking neither parts nor accidents have being, but only the complete supposit;" and above he had said: "That being is sometimes of reason, sometimes of nature, and that being of nature is said in two ways: sometimes it expresses the first act which is the essence of a thing, which is the principle of actually existing; sometimes it expresses the second act, which is the act of a being through essence, as to shine is the act of something shining through light itself. And being is said in the first way of propositions, in the second way of natures, and in the third way of the supposits of natures, because it is the act of the supposit as of what is, and of the form as of that by which it is." Thus therefore, since existence — like any other accidental predicate — necessarily requires a subject that is not only a subject quo but also sustaining and receptive of these forms and denominated by them, and with respect to existence specifically has the nature of a subject because the supposit is that which is directly made through production — since production is terminated at the whole and the complete, and production does not come to rest before

the whole that is to be produced in some thing is produced — and existence belongs by reason of production, because through it the thing is placed outside causes in the achieved state of being: therefore that which is directly the subject of production or produced through it. And furthermore, because the producer or generator of a substance intends to produce something similar to itself and to propagate its species, which is not done except by producing an integral and complete individual in which the likeness of the nature is preserved — for one who produces a hand or foot is not said to propagate the nature but one who produces a person or supposit as another self. Therefore the supposit is properly and directly the produced terminus and consequently properly and through itself the receptive of existence, because properly and through itself it is that which is made, and consequently that which is in the achieved state of being, whereas existence is that by which something is in the achieved state of being.

III. But you will object: existence and nature are immediately united to one another and make a composite called an existent — since existence and nature cannot be united in that third subsistent unless they are united among themselves as the extremes of such a union. Therefore when they are understood to be united among themselves, nature is affected by existence prior to subsistence, and so subsistence supervenes upon the existing thing and can terminate and modify the existence itself. This is confirmed because a substance is constituted as existing through itself, but not a nature as such — for it is defined as existing through itself, and is constituted through itself by means of subsistence; therefore subsistence immediately and through itself affects existence and not nature, since it renders nature existing through itself; therefore existence is presupposed in nature prior to subsistence, since it is rendered existing through itself. Second, because at least by divine power nature can be constituted as existent prior to being subsistent. Therefore subsistence is not the formal ground of receiving existence, but at most a certain condition; and thus formally subsistence affects existence prior to

nature. The consequence is evident: for if there is no essential ordering between subsistence and existence, there is no reason or foundation for saying that subsistence is the terminus of nature and not of existence, from the fact that it does not yet presuppose existence — since there is no implication in its presupposing it, if God were to grant existence to nature prior to subsistence. More may be seen in q. 7 Physics, a. 1.

IV. It is replied that as Saint Thomas says in III Sent. ad Annibald, d. 5, q. unica, a. 2, ad 1: "To be united is said in two ways: either to become one, or to be made in one;" and he explains this with the example of the union of the human and divine natures, which are united not because they become one but because they are made in one — that is, in one supposit in which they communicate. Hence we extend this doctrine to all those things that are united in such a way as to remain unconfused and unmixed; and so accidents and subject are united to one another because they meet in one subject or supposit; and similarly existence and nature are not united in such a way as to become one — so that existence would be nature and nature would be existence, or they would be mingled in some third thing — but they are united in one, that is, in the supposit. Hence they are not first understood to be united among themselves prior to being united in that one in which they are joined. And so not only is existence united immediately to the supposit itself as to the subject of denomination, but it is also united to the supposit itself as the immediate receptive of existence and as that which is the ground of receiving such a union and of constituting the unity resulting from it — since the union is not a union whereby they become one but a union whereby they are made in one; and such a union cannot be understood except with the supposit intervening as that in which the union is made, because that union is in one, that is, in the supposit. Hence we must not philosophize about the union of nature and existence and the union of nature and accidents as about the union of matter and form — as some wish — which are first united among themselves as parts before being in the whole that results from them.

But this doctrine runs for those parts or extremes that are so united as to make one nature or become one; whereas it does not run if they are only united in one, remaining unconfused and unmixed among themselves. Now matter and form are so united that they constitute one thing, and so they are not united through the whole itself as a medium, but immediately among themselves, so that the whole results from them. But accidents and existence are not compared to nature as parts that constitute one thing, but as extremes that are united in one, because they remain unconfused and unmixed among themselves.

V. To the first confirmation it is replied that subsistence does not render existence through itself by actuating and supervening upon it, but by submitting itself to it — because it completes the nature itself and immediately comes to it by terminating it; and this termination of subsisting is the termination of singularity which pertains to the third mode per se. But singularity or individuation antecedes existence and pertains to the complement of nature, and so something is said to exist through itself because without communication of itself or dependence on a further terminus it seeks existence; and so when existence comes to an independent and incommunicable subject, it is rendered subsistent and through itself — that is, not depending and not communicable — and so incommunicability does not first come to the subject and then supervene upon it, but the subject is first rendered incommunicable and then the coming existence is also rendered through itself. And the reason is that to formal existence itself there belongs only the rendering and placing of the thing outside causes; but that it is of this or that perfection comes entirely from the nature or subject of which it is the existence — just as from the nature it also has its species and determination — and thus subsistence through itself terminates nature, and with that termination, existence coming to it is also rendered incommunicable and subsisting through itself, that is, incommunicable to another.

VI. To the second confirmation it is replied that some consider subsistence to stand as the formal ground of receiving existence, others as a condition. The former say that existence cannot be received except in a supposit, just as a vital act cannot be received except in a vital potency, nor can the sensitive grade exist unless the vegetative precede it. And this is so because nature and existence are united not so as to become one but so as to be made in one. Therefore existence necessarily requires for its union and conjunction that subsistence precede in nature so that that union as in which may take place. The latter however say that subsistence stands only as a condition for existence, which is connaturally required but not essentially. And in this opinion it must be said that God by absolute power can join existence to nature before subsistence, but then it will not be united in the connatural way — just as He can preserve existence in an accident without inherence — and so subsistence will be the connatural but not the essential or essentially required terminus of nature. In the first opinion, however, subsistence is essentially required, such that without it substance is not capable of existing, since it is not capable of the union with something distinct from itself except in one of the two aforesaid ways: either because it becomes one with it or because it is made in one with it; and without subsistence the union cannot be made in one, because there is no third in which that union is made; and so it would only become one, which however is impossible to be made from those two extremes, because they must be united in such a way as to remain unconfused — that is, neither mingled into one, since mixture comes from the corruption of the miscibles, which does not intervene here, nor do they constitute one nature as extremes but the constituted thing is terminated by them.

VII. But if you press: how in a separated accident is existence united to it — and indeed other accidents too, such as heat or cold to quantity separated in the Eucharist — and yet the separated accident does not have any mode by reason of which the union of such accidents takes place as in which they are

united, and they are made not one but in one — especially in our opinion, in which we do not posit a superadded mode to the accident in order for it to be separated, as we said in the book De Generatione, q. 6. It is replied that even though the accident from its separation does not acquire any positive intrinsic mode of being or subsisting through itself — because by its nature it does not demand to be thus — it nonetheless acquires a certain negative mode, namely actual independence from the subject together with the extrinsic sustentation of God; and this supplies the mode of subsisting, for it leaves that accident, if not subsisting through itself, at least sustained through itself negatively — that is, through the very positive concurrence of God, independent of the subject in being. And this suffices for something to be able to be united to it unconfusedly and unmixedly as in one, and not only as one; because without an intrinsic mode of subsisting, through the mere negative termination made from that positive extrinsic concurrence, it is rendered sufficiently capable of sustaining other accidents in being and consequently unconfusedly.

Subsistence is always indivisible.

VIII. In q. 7 Physics, a. 3, we showed that in a substantial composite there are no partial subsistences belonging to the parts from which one total subsistence is integrated — because subsistence is actually and formally repugnant to the nature of a part, since subsistence is the termination by which a thing is actually terminated in itself, whereas a part as a part is not terminated in itself but is joined to the whole and terminated in the whole. Indeed if parts actually subsist in themselves with partial subsistences, then since there are infinitely many parts in potency, it is necessary either to actually multiply infinite subsistences — if each part however divisible to infinity claims its own proper subsistence, which is a great inconvenience — or only finite subsistences are to be posited, so that one subsistence belongs to a determinate portion of parts; and then, apart from the fact that it is scarcely assignable in how large a portion of parts a distinct subsistence is posited, one

falls into the opinion we intend to avoid, since that entire collection or determinate portion comprehends under it several parts, which nevertheless a single subsistence affects — not one composed of partial subsistences; otherwise, if it were composed of partial ones, the same argument returns: whether those partial subsistences are actually infinite or finite, etc. Therefore if a single subsistence not composed of partial subsistences suffices for one determinate part under which several others are contained, why will not a single subsistence also suffice in the whole itself, even though several parts are contained under it?

IX. And from this by an evident consequence it is gathered that if a single subsistence not composed of partial subsistences suffices for affecting some whole or some part under which several other parts are contained, such subsistence is given as formally indivisible — that is, not composed of and not consisting of partial subsistences — even though it is virtually divisible, and on the part of the effect, because it perfects a divisible thing. Yet because it does this in an indivisible mode — that is, in the manner of an ultimate terminus and totality — it is therefore said to be indivisible, just as in q. 2 De Anima we said that the souls of perfect animals are indivisible: not because they do not have a divisible effect by perfecting and informing divisible parts, but because they regard all those parts in an indivisible mode — that is, in the manner of one integral and consummated disposition for the soul, insofar as it requires an organic body, and what is organic is not found without several terminated parts. In the same way the nature of the ultimate terminus, from the fact that it is ultimate, must be formally indivisible; otherwise it would not be ultimate, even though in terminating it regards several divisible parts.

X. And this is the mind and doctrine of Saint Thomas, who perpetually denies partial subsistences, as we showed in the cited place; and furthermore one may see in III Sent. ad Annibald, d. 5, q. unica, where he says: "That the nature of a part is contrary to the nature of a person, since a person is

something complete and perfect and subsisting through itself, whereas the nature of a part is the nature of something imperfect; and therefore the nature of a person does not belong to it." And the same is found in I, q. 29, a. 1, ad 2, and a. 2, and in Contra Gent. IV, c. 49, ad 10: "Nor are the parts of any substance called particular substances in the sense of being subsisting through themselves, but they subsist in the whole; hence they cannot be called hypostases, since none of them is a complete subsistence; otherwise it would follow that in one man there would be as many hypostases as there are parts." Nor can it be said that Saint Thomas denies to substantial parts complete and total subsistences but not partial ones. For against this: Saint Thomas speaks of parts as they are united in the whole, because he speaks of those which subsist in the whole; but total separated subsistences — each of which constitutes a whole — were in no way dubitable as not belonging to parts as they are in the whole. For what would Saint Thomas be saying if he only said that parts do not have total subsistences, which is the same as saying that parts are not the whole — which would be plainly a tautology? If therefore he denies that parts plainly have subsistences, because they subsist in the whole, he surely denies them partial subsistences, since only of these are they capable; and by saying that they subsist in the whole he only acknowledges the total subsistence in which parts mediately subsist.

XI. And from this the foundation adduced above is further explained: that subsistence imports the mode and formality of the whole in the manner of an ultimate terminus, such that the very nature of totality and termination is provided by subsistence; therefore true and proper subsistence cannot belong to parts — unless one speaks equivocally of subsistence — and since it is the mode of the whole as the whole is, by making it the mode of a part as a part is. Thus the force of this foundation and argument consists in this: that subsistence or personality pertains to the nature of the whole and the complete; for some mode must be posited for the complement of nature and for the nature of the ultimate terminus, by which nature is rendered

ultimately terminated and complete; for this formal effect must be provided by some form or formality, and this we call subsistence or personality. But it is repugnant that this nature or formality of totality should be found partially or should be composed of partial modes; for even though the entity of the whole is composed of the entities of the parts, nevertheless the mode of partiality is opposed to the mode of totality and termination — since the mode of partiality is the mode of communicability whereas the mode of totality or subsistence is the mode of incommunicability. Therefore to say that partial subsistence is given is the same as saying that there is a terminus that is not ultimate or not terminating, and that incommunicability is communicable — for incommunicability pertains to subsistence and to the nature of a part it pertains to be communicable. But if partial subsistences are said to be communicable and to express the mode of a part and not of a whole, it must consequently be said that partial subsistence is not of the same nature as total subsistence but rather opposed to it and importing the privation of it — as communicable and incommunicable — and therefore one cannot be composed from others. Hence it is necessary to note well where the hallucination occurs: that even though the entity of the whole is composed of the entity of the parts, nevertheless the state or mode of the part cannot compose the mode or state of totality, because it is opposed to it; and so partial subsistences cannot compose total subsistence. Moreover, just as in quantity one indivisible point terminates the entire line and all its parts, while other intermediate points do not have the nature of terminating even partially — but only of continuing — so in substance the mode of a part cannot be called a partial subsistence but only the subsistence of the whole, because it is the ultimate terminus and complement.

XII. Against this resolution however, beyond what was already resolved in q. 7 Physics, a. 3, you will object first from Father Suárez, Disp. 34 Met., sect. 5, because subsistence in material things has extension throughout the entire body; therefore also division and composition — for whatever is extended

must be divisible and composite. Second, because the subsistence of a corporeal thing is not whole in the whole and whole in each part; otherwise it would be in a spiritual mode; therefore it will be whole in the whole and a part in the parts, and so subsistence has parts, which is the same as there being partial subsistences. Third, because subsistence is a mode, as we said above; therefore it is not united through inherence as an accident is, but through identification with the thing of which it is a mode; therefore if that thing has parts, so also does the mode, nor can one mode be identified with all the parts. Fourth, because the divine Word assumed the human nature and its parts, as theologians commonly teach in III, q. 6; therefore parts are assumable; but they are assumed by the divine subsistence by destroying their proper subsistence; therefore parts have some partial subsistence.

XIII. To the first it is replied that subsistence does not formally have extension or parts, but only virtually, because it regards the parts of its composite as to be terminated; and so it is said to be terminatively divisible, because it is the terminus of divisible things and regards all those parts as mediately reached by reaching the composite itself which consists of those parts — for it regards that whole in the manner of one, because in the manner of a terminus. Just as a terminating point regards all the parts of the line in the manner of one and is in them inadequately, insofar as it regards all those parts in the manner of a terminus. Hence Saint Thomas says in q. 9 De Potentia, a. 3, ad 4: "That it is accidental to the person as such that it is composite, from the fact that the complement and perfection required for the nature of a person is not found at once in one simple thing, but requires the union of many." Therefore personality or subsistence does not formally have parts — that is, partial subsistences — but only presupposes parts from which it originates, because it results from the composite itself insofar as it is a whole and integral from its parts; and so it presupposes parts as required for the whole — but this is per accidens and materially, because the whole is composed of parts; for in angels there is a whole and a subsistence without any resultance from parts. And

such a mode resulting from the whole itself, insofar as it has the nature of totality, so belongs immediately to the whole and mediately to its parts that it is not divided with the division of the parts, because it does not belong to them according to how they are distinguished and extended into several parts, but according to how they are unified into the unity and termination of the whole; and so it is only in the parts terminatively and inadequately, but formally in the whole precisely as it is one — just as a point is not in any part or parts adequately but inadequately, even though it terminates all parts, because it regards all parts terminatively insofar as they are comprehended in some unity and termination, not informatively in them insofar as they are many. And so it is not repugnant for something indivisible, without being formally extended in itself, to affect several divisible things terminatively and inadequately, because it regards them under some aspect of unity or of what is ultimate, and not under the aspect of plurality and extension. We use this doctrine in many philosophical examples: the soul of perfect animals is formally indivisible, because even though it regards several parts of the body as to be informed, it regards all of them in the manner of one, because it requires the body to be informable as organic, and the ultimate disposition in the nature of a soul; similarly, an indivisible quality can be intensified by a divisible motion and its grades acquired by a divisible motion, even though the grades themselves are not divisible parts but modes of a more perfect rooting — which are however virtually divisible insofar as between one and another there is a positive latitude to be overcome by motion, because there are positive termini between them, just as the species of an intermediate color are also acquired by motion whereby one passes from one species to another, not because between species and species there is a part or half of the species to be acquired, but because there is a positive latitude between species and species. Similarly there can be in the whole itself a relation of the whole to the parts, which nevertheless is not in the parts themselves partially and divisibly, since the parts rather have the opposite correlation. And finally, a point terminates the parts of a line, yet is not in individual parts divisibly.

XIV. To the second it is replied that the entire subsistence is in the whole, presupposing the composition from parts so that the very mode of totality results; yet the entire subsistence is not in the parts, nor are parts of the subsistence formally in them, but it is only in the parts terminatively and mediately, because it terminates all of them by affecting the whole in one unique and total mode in which it is uniquely and totally terminable, and it affects the parts under the aspect of the whole — not in the manner of extension and divisibility of itself but in the manner of termination and unity, as was shown in the examples adduced above and will be shown more fully in article four.

XV. To the third it is said that the mode of the whole, as distinguished from the mode of parts, is in the whole without division into parts, but by terminating the whole it affects the parts virtually insofar as they constitute the whole itself and are presupposed for it — and not by formally dividing itself through them.

XVI. To the fourth it is said that the Word assumed parts as they are in the whole and constitute the whole, but not by attributing to them a partial subsistence; for it is said no less that the Word or Christ is both, by giving subsistence to the whole, and also in that, parts are understood as assumed mediately and insofar as they are in the whole — not however immediately and through a partial subsistence. See what we said in the cited place in the Physics.

XVII. Then you will object: because in the rational soul there is a partial and communicable subsistence, and when separated it does not subsist as a whole or as a person, as Saint Thomas teaches in III Sent., d. 5, q. 3, and there ad Annibald, a. 2, ad 4, and I, q. 29, a. 1, ad 5; therefore it subsists as a part. Similarly, many theologians posit in God an absolute subsistence besides the relative ones, as will be shown below in the matter on the Trinity — and not in the manner of a supposit or person but as communicable to the three

Persons; therefore it is not repugnant for partial subsistences to be given which do not constitute a supposit but an ultimate terminus.

XVIII. It is replied that the separated rational soul, even though it is subsistent insofar as it exists independently of another — which is not found in other forms or substantial parts (and therefore they do not have a partial subsistence in the nature of an incommunicable terminus, nor an existence through themselves in the nature of independence in being) — we still say that that subsistence or per se existence of the rational soul is not a partial subsistence; for in that case it would presuppose another partial one on the part of the body, in order to compose with it one total subsistence — and so if we posit a partial subsistence in the soul for composing one integral subsistence, we are necessarily bound to also posit in the body as distinguished from the soul a partial subsistence that composes with the subsistence of the soul; and so it will not be proper to the soul to have subsistence through itself and to exist in separation. But if in the body we do not admit a partial subsistence, and yet the soul subsists in separation, it must necessarily be said that the entire subsistence of the man is given in the soul, but not totally explained in the soul — rather it is explained in the communication of the soul to the body, and there it subsists incommunicably, insofar as it is no longer explicable and communicable to another; and for this reason the separated soul is not a person, because subsistence is not there in an incommunicable mode; yet that same subsistence which is in the man is in the soul, and the same existence, as Saint Thomas teaches in I-II, q. 4, a. 5, ad 2, as we showed in the cited q. 7 Physics. And when a man dies, the entire being of the man indeed remains in the soul, but it does not remain communicated to the body — and this is what it is for the man to die; nor does that being of the soul remain as the being of the man, because it is not being communicated to the body, just as the divine Word, if it were to release the humanity, would not lose being and subsistence simply, but as communicated to the man and as human. More may be seen in the cited place.

ARTICLE III.
Whether existence is really distinguished from essence in created things, and in what way?

I. It must first be supposed what we understand by the name of existence, because unless agreement is reached on this the difficulty cannot be understood and explained. By the name of existence, therefore, is commonly understood by all that by which something is denominated placed outside causes and outside nothing in the achieved state of being. For this, some extrinsic denomination arising from a past production does not suffice, nor does a pure and sole relation of dependence on an agent. And the reason for both is that existence, or being, is something most real and intrinsically denominating the existing thing, since no thing is said to exist unless it is really placed outside causes in itself, and by reason of having such being it is most sharply distinguished from a being of reason and from negations, in that through existence it is placed outside nothing. Therefore it must be something real in the existing thing itself, and consequently must not be a mere extrinsic denomination, since this posits nothing real in what is denominated. Nor is existence a relation to another, because each thing is said to be in relation to itself; for it exists only insofar as it has being in itself; indeed, even a relation itself, whose entire being is toward another, is not said to exist by reason of the toward but by reason of the in, because each thing exists toward itself and not toward another.

II. Second, it must be supposed that existence taken in this way is distinguished from subsistence, and that Saint Thomas does not take subsistence and existence for the same thing — in which some are greatly deceived, thinking that Saint Thomas regards existence and subsistence as the same. Indeed, some who cannot deny that in the doctrine of Thomas existence and essence are really distinguished in creatures, nevertheless say that existence is not taken for the actuality by which the thing is placed outside

nothing and outside causes — for this, they say, is not distinguished from real essence, or essence placed outside the state of possibility — but is taken for that which constitutes the thing as existing through itself or in another, and that in this way it is distinguished by Saint Thomas from essence; which is to take existence for the mode of subsistence or inherence. So recently Biescas, above, I, q. 3, a. 4, dub. 11, and q. 4, a. 1, dub. 3, in which he plainly agrees with those outside the school of Saint Thomas who do not distinguish existence from essence placed in reality; for these do not take existence except for the actuality rendering the thing outside causes, as can be seen in Father Suárez, Disp. 31 Met., sect. 4; Vázquez, in I, q. 17, a. 2, disp. 73, c. last, and others; nor do they take it for subsistence, nor do they refuse to concede that subsistence is distinguished on the part of the thing from essence and nature, since it is established that human nature is in Christ without subsistence. Therefore in Saint Thomas it is manifest that existence is distinguished from subsistence, and both from essence; for Saint Thomas disputes as distinct difficulties the distinction of existence from essence and the distinction of the supposit or subsistence from nature. Therefore he does not take subsistence and existence for the same thing, unless he is making a useless repetition. This is manifestly evident, for in this question, article 3, he inquires whether God is distinguished from his nature, and resolves in article 3 that in immaterial substances the supposit is not distinguished from nature, though it is in composites. In article 4, however, he inquires whether being and essence are distinguished in God, and resolves that in all creatures they are distinguished but not in God; and existence and being are the same, and if he were speaking there of the being of essence he would falsely say it is distinguished from essence in creatures, for the being that is distinguished from essence is only the being of existence. Therefore if in the prior article he were taking subsistence for existence, or in this fourth article existence for subsistence, there would be a useless repetition and an inconsistency. The same appears in Quodl. 2, a. 3 and 4; for in a. 3 he inquires whether essence and being are distinguished in angels, and in a. 4 whether the supposit and nature are distinguished.

Therefore he does not take existence for subsistence or vice versa. And the same can be seen in II Sent., d. 3, q. 1, a. 1 and 2, where he presupposes these same difficulties as distinct. And this is because in the doctrine of Saint Thomas the supposit or subsistence has its root in the nature itself, for it arises from the individual principles of the nature; and therefore Saint Thomas was always concerned to distinguish the supposit or subsistence from nature in its very root — that is, in the individual principles, which are distinguished only in material natures, not in immaterial ones, as was seen above. But existence has no root in the nature itself; rather it comes to it precisely from an extrinsic agent, because existence places the thing outside causes, and so it follows the production of the thing; indeed it is the very production in the achieved state of being, as is established from this fourth article, where Saint Thomas shows that existence in creatures is neither the essence, nor a part of the essence, nor a property, but comes from without. It is also established that existence is common to accident and substance, whereas subsistence is not; therefore Saint Thomas cannot take existence for subsistence. Finally, it is a great inconvenience that Saint Thomas should perpetually speak with this impropriety, confusedly conflating existence with subsistence and never discerning how one is distinguished from the other, but always, when treating of existence, digressing to subsistence and leaving unresolved that difficulty of how the being of existence, considered in itself, is distinguished from essence — if he only distinguishes subsistence but not existence, which solely provides being outside causes and in the common sense of authors is taken for something other than subsistence. And especially because Saint Thomas teaches that existence or being is received in the supposit or hypostasis and not in nature, and he is not speaking of the being of essence, because that is the essence or nature itself and is found in the assumed humanity, in which however, according to Saint Thomas, there is no proper being of existence. Similarly he teaches that in God there is one being and three subsistences or Persons; but if he were taking existence for subsistence he would say there is in God one subsistence and three subsistences. Similarly, to say that existence is

received in subsistence would be the same as saying that existence is received in existence, which is a tautology. On this, however, one may consult III, q. 17, a. 2, and Quodl. 9, a. 2, and other places where he teaches that being pertains to the hypostasis.

III. Finally, it must be supposed that the difficulty does not consist in this: whether created essence in the state of possibility is distinguished from existence — for it is established that the state of possibility involves the absence of existence and consequently must be distinguished from it, at least as a privation or negation is distinguished from a positive form — but the difficulty is whether essence, even in the state of actuality, is distinguished from the existence through which it is rendered actual; such that although this entire complex of actual essence cannot be distinguished from existence as from something distinct from that whole complex — for they are related as what includes and what is included — yet within that very complex the difficulty is whether a twofold entity concurs: one of the essence, which receives existence, and another of existence, which renders the essence actual. Just as a white body is distinguished from the whiteness by which it is rendered white not only when the whiteness is removed but also while it is under that whiteness; whereas an existent thing, once existence is removed, entirely ceases to be and remains nothing, while the body with whiteness removed remains existent, and so there it is easy to discern how it is really distinguished from whiteness; but with respect to existence it does not so easily appear that some entity called essence is distinguished from it, because it is found in act only as long as it is under existence, and with existence removed essence remains nothing and only objectively in the state of possibility. And from this some have inferred that essence and existence cannot be distinguished except as nothing and being, and as a thing in the state of possibility and that same thing in the state outside causes; but that even while essence exists it should be distinguished from existence, such that existence is one reality and essence another — even though one without the other is

nothing — this is the whole difficulty. It suffices therefore to see whether, in order that essence be actual and placed in the nature of things, a twofold entity is required: one called essence, which receives existence, and another which is a form or some formality actuating it; or whether a single entity suffices, which as produced by an agent is called existent, but as producible and in the state of possibility is called an objectively possible essence.

IV. In this difficulty, therefore, we showed in the said question 7 of the Physics, following the mind of Saint Thomas, that existence is really distinguished from essence, and not only by reason according to Durand and other more recent authors, nor by a formal distinction according to Scotus. Now Saint Thomas's disciples commonly follow him on this point, as well as those to be cited below: Cajetan, Capreolus, Ferrariensis, Nazarius, Navarrete, Báñez, and Molina in this question, a. 4, disp. 2; Gillius, lib. 2, tract. 4, cap. 6, n. 2. The mind of Saint Thomas can be elicited from two sources: first, from those passages in which he expressly affirms that in creatures essence and being differ, which cannot in any way be explained as a diversity only by reason but on the part of the thing; second, from those conditions he attributes to existence or to essence, which are such that they can only be found in things that really differ.

V. As to the first, in the first place in Opusc. 48, the treatise On Substance, c. 2, he expressly says: "That the being of essence and the being of actual existence differ really, as two diverse things." He affirms the same of angels in I, q. 50, a. 2, ad 3, and Opusc. 42, c. 5, where he says: "That angels have being other than their substance," and in Contra Gent. II, c. 55, and Quodl. 2, a. 3, where he says: "That in every creature the creature itself which has being is other than its being itself," and in II Sent. ad Annibald, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, ad 3, he says: "That since in angels substance differs from being, there will be act and potency there, yet not matter and form but form and being." And generally on the distinction of being from essence one may consult Opusc. 15, c. 7 and

8, and q. 21 De Veritate, a. 5, ad 8, where he says: "It does not follow that the substance of the thing itself is not said to be through some being which it itself is not, and because its being is not said to be a being through some being other than itself," and Quodl. 3, a. 20: "Every other thing besides God is a being by participation, such that in it the substance is one thing and the participated being itself another." In these passages Saint Thomas is not speaking of the being of essence, for it is manifest that this is not distinguished from essence; he is therefore speaking of the being of existence, which, as we said, is not to be confused with subsistence.

VI. Nor is the solution admissible that Saint Thomas is speaking of the distinction of being itself from essence by reason and not really, or that he is speaking of nature in the possible state objectively with respect to itself as in act. For in the first place this solution does not prevail against the first passage from Opusc. 48, where he most expressly distinguishes the act of existence from the act of essence really. Then, because in those very passages in which he affirms that in immaterial things the supposit is not distinguished from nature — namely originatively and radically, or on the part of the individual principles, as we have already explained above — he affirms in those same passages that existence is other than essence, as is established in this question, a. 3, ad 4, and in II Sent., d. 3, q. 1, a. 1 and 2; and in Contra Gent. IV, c. 55, ad 4, he says: "That in angels the supposit does not differ from nature," and in Contra Gent. II, c. 51, he affirms: "That being differs from essence in angels," and in many other passages cited above when treating of the distinction of supposit and nature. But when he says the supposit and nature are not distinguished in spiritual things, he speaks of a real distinction, for by reason they are distinguished not only in spiritual things but even in God himself. Therefore when he teaches that in those same things existence and essence are distinguished or that existence is other than essence, he is also speaking of a real distinction; otherwise he would be proceeding very equivocally and would be saying the same thing about the being of existence and about

subsistence. That Saint Thomas does not take existence for subsistence or the mode of being when he distinguishes it from essence we have shown abundantly above.

VII. Second, the mind of Saint Thomas regarding the real distinction of existence from essence is gathered from those conditions he attributes to each: for in the first place he proves that the supposit itself in angels is distinguished from nature — taken not originatively for the principle of individuation but formally for the terminus itself — because being is distinguished from nature and is not of its concept, and yet is received in the supposit, as is established from Quodl. 2 itself, a. 4. Therefore if the supposit is distinguished from nature — since nature can be assumed with subsistence removed — a fortiori existence itself will be distinguished on the part of the thing; otherwise Saint Thomas would not argue well. And this argument is pressed more urgently: for we gather most especially that subsistence is distinguished from nature on the part of the thing because the humanity in Christ is without its own subsistence; but similarly, according to the principles of Saint Thomas, the humanity of Christ is also without its own existence; therefore existence is distinguished from essence. The major is noted and conceded. The minor is proved: for in Quodl. 9, a. 3, he inquires whether in Christ there is only one being, and replies that there is one being which is proper to the supposit; where he does not take being for subsistence or the supposit, otherwise he would prove that there is in Christ one being, that is, one supposit, because there is one supposit — which would be plainly absurd. Nor should he say that there is one being which is proper to the supposit, for the supposit is not proper to the supposit but identical with it. And Saint Thomas teaches the same in III Sent., d. 6, q. 2, a. 2, and in I, q. 17, a. 2, where he says that in Christ no double being is found but only one. Nor can it be said that Saint Thomas is speaking of the existence of the supposit and not of the existence of the nature, such that there are two existences just as there are two entities, and so with the supposit absent the existence of it is absent. For against this: Saint

Thomas in the cited Quodl. 9 says that this being which is impeded in Christ results from those things from which the unity of Christ is constituted, which certainly pertains to the being of the humanity itself; for the unity is that of the humanity, that is, of the nature. Indeed, Saint Thomas expressly says there that if the humanity is separated from the divinity, then the humanity will have its own being other than the divine being. Therefore the being that is now lacking to the humanity of Christ, in the view of Saint Thomas, is the being also of the nature itself, and not only the being of the substance as though it were a distinct being of the nature. And finally because in that article Saint Thomas recognizes only a double being: the first is the being resulting from those things from which the unity of the substance is constituted, which is properly the substantial being of the supposit; the other is the being attributed to the supposit beyond those things that constitute it, which is a superadded being, namely an accidental one, as being white is attributed to Socrates. Therefore according to Saint Thomas no existence of a nature distinct from the existence of subsistence is given, but only a single being resulting from those things from which the unity of the thing is constituted; therefore it is one being for the entire substance when it is one, even though it results from those things; therefore what results is distinguished from them.

VIII. Finally, Saint Thomas frequently posits a composition between essence and existence even in angels, and that therefore the essence of an angel and of any thing other than God is in a receptive potency toward existence; for so in Opusc. 15, c. 8, he says: "That the substance of a thing having being is like the receptive potency of the thing for this act which is being." This cannot be understood of the essence of an angel or of another creature objectively and in the state of possibility, because under this state essence is not receptive of existence but rather exclusive of it, since it is a state opposed to the state of existing; therefore it can only be receptive of existence when it is actually produced and subjected to existence itself, such that it is not existent through

itself but through the existence which it is subjected to and which it receives. And we pursued this argument at greater length in q. 7 Physics, a. 4, where it may be consulted.

IX. The principal foundation of this opinion is established by Saint Thomas in this: that existence is a real predicate belonging contingently to the creature, and not the essence of the creature or a part of the essence, but derived from the agent and belonging to it contingently. In which it is necessary to remove the equivocation when it is said that actual essence placed in reality is distinguished from existence; for actual essence must not be taken for the actuality of existence reduplicatively, since to say that an existing essence is existent is without doubt an essential predication; but this can be said of any accidental predicates whatsoever, for when I say a body is white it is an accidental predication, and there the word body is taken for a body conjoined with whiteness and not separated from it; yet if one says a white body is white, such that white is expressed on the part of the subject, the predication becomes essential. Therefore, since for essence to be existent imports an accidental predication, it is necessary, on the part of the subject, when it is said that essence is existent, to take essence as concomitantly subjected to and conjoined with existence and not separated from it and in the state of possibility, yet without reduplicating or expressing the actuality of existence; for in that way the predication becomes essential: an existing essence is existent. Taking essence therefore without this reduplication and expression, Saint Thomas takes this principle: that it is perfectly possible for some thing to receive a form or actuality through which it is rendered existent, and so existence is not always presupposed and preceded in the receiving subject before something is received, but the thing can indeed be rendered existent through what it receives. If this is once understood, this entire question is rendered of no difficulty, for it will be established how something can be rendered existent through something distinct from itself and received in itself.

X. The argument of Saint Thomas is therefore formed thus: Because it is perfectly possible for a form or actuality to be received in something through which it is constituted in being, and for being itself not to be presupposed on the part of the recipient, therefore it is perfectly possible that being or existence is something distinct from essence. The antecedent is in the first place asserted in these very words by Saint Thomas in Opusc. 31, at the beginning, where he says: "That matter differs from a subject in this: that a subject is that which does not have being from something that comes to it, but is through itself and has complete being — as a human being does not have being through whiteness — whereas matter is said to be that which has being from what comes to it, because from itself it has incomplete being, indeed no being at all, as the Commentator says in II De Anima. Hence speaking simply, form gives being to matter, whereas an accident does not give being to the subject, but the subject gives being to the accident." Then this same point is proved from the very concept of substantial form, which by its own proper nature as such a form is not sustained in being by a subject — for that is proper to an inhering form — and therefore for its reception it does not require being in the subject as though it were to receive from it, but only that the subject be capable of the being which is provided through the form. Now there are only two kinds of form: substantial and accidental; therefore there are only two kinds of being: substantial and accidental. But substantial being, by the very fact that it is substantial, is the first being and being simply; therefore from its proper concept it must not come to a subject in which being is already presupposed, but rather must give to it that first being itself; otherwise it would not give being simply and first but always a second or superadded being, which is accidental being. And this is confirmed from substantial generation itself, for through it the first substantial being of the thing is produced in such a way that no being of that thing is presupposed; otherwise, if some being in act in the very thing that is generated were presupposed, there would be no way of distinguishing substantial generation from alteration. And I say in the very thing that is generated, because in the

corrupted thing that precedes, existence is presupposed but is corrupted, and in the matter that remains there is found a capacity for having the being of the form, and so it is distinguished from creation, which is purely from nothing and without any subject. But if matter is supposed to be existent and to remain with its existence in the generated thing, then substantial generation does not generate the first and simply being, and we have no way of refuting the ancient philosophers who did not distinguish alteration from generation, because they did not acknowledge any subject that was not presupposed in act and existent, and consequently through the coming of a form did not receive the first being which is being simply. Therefore in order that this error of the ancients be rooted out entirely, it is necessary to agree on this principle: that something can through a supervening form receive substantial and first being, or being simply, so that substantial generation may be established; otherwise the way to that error is never closed off — that generation is not distinguished from alteration — if a subject actually existent is posited for substantial generation itself. To say that the subject presupposed is not complete but incomplete does not resolve the difficulty: both because by the very fact that the form presupposes an incomplete being it does not give the first being simply; and because this remained to be proved against the ancient philosophers — that there should be such an incomplete being which, joined with another incomplete being, would make one being per se and first simply, for they denied substantial forms because they said the subject of generation is a being in act, and so they said a form that provides the first being is not required or given; but if it presupposes the first being and only superadds another, they say it is not a substantial but an accidental form. Therefore to prove to the ancients a substantial generation distinct from alteration on the grounds that matter is presupposed having an incomplete being in act, and that the substantial form gives it an incomplete being, so that from both beings together one complete being is made, is to presuppose that there are substantial forms giving an incomplete being — which they denied — and

not to prove that a substantial generation exists because the first and substantial being is produced.

XI. Finally, this same point is proved because no repugnance or inconvenience appears in something existing through an existence superadded to it and received in it; for this is not repugnant on the part of the recipient itself, because for receiving, a concomitant existence suffices — such that the receiving subject in reality never lacks being — yet it is not required that it possess being from itself; and consequently there is no repugnance by virtue of the receiving cause, or for exercising this causality of receiving, that being should precede on the part of the recipient; but it can be perfectly well understood that the subject has being through the received form, since what is required is not the existence of the recipient but the capacity for existing, provided that the existence itself accompanies — had, however, through the form and not by virtue of the matter. And the reason for this is that nothing receives by reason of the act it has, but by reason of its potency toward what it does not have; therefore the ground of receiving is not being but capacity and potency. And this is so because material causality is ordered more to the proper being and advantage of the recipient than to giving to others; for it receives in order to have some being, and the cause that causes by receiving and not by giving does not require from the force of its formal ground being but capacity for being; whereas if it receives by sustaining and giving being — as substance does to an accident — this is not precisely to receive but to sustain and establish in being, and therefore being as act is prerequired for this. But when something is received not by giving but by purely receiving, capacity suffices and not the actuality of existence — for such a subject does not provide this, but only potentiality; and to communicate that potentiality, actuality is not required but only potency and capacity; and it suffices for existence to concomitantly accompany, such that it is never found in reality without existence, just as it is never found without form. Therefore if from the very concept and intrinsic nature of the receptive potency being does not

precede and is not required except concomitantly, there is no reason why we should say that there cannot be a receptive potency of existence itself, such that in reality a thing always has existence received from something superadded to it, through whose concomitance it exists, while by reason of its potentiality it receives; and thus whenever some thing is produced outside its causes, there is no repugnance in understanding that a twofold entity intervenes there: one of the thing itself which exists by receiving, and the other which is the ground of existing as an actuality giving being.

XII. It remains now to show that what we have thus declared possible is also necessarily to be posited as actually the case. The reason and foundation for this is taken from the fact that existence is a real predicate belonging contingently both to essence and to all its parts and predicates — for there is none to which existence belongs quidditatively or with which it has a necessary connection — since existence comes only from the extrinsic production of the agent, without any other foundation in created nature than that the created nature has in itself the capacity to receive it. Therefore it must necessarily be really distinguished on the part of the thing from essence itself. The antecedent is sufficiently known: that it is a real predicate is manifest, since nothing is so real as existence itself, through which something is really outside causes and is distinguished from what is only through reason. That it belongs contingently is also per se known, since a proposition of eternal truth and per se connection of existence with a creature can never be formed. The consequence is evident, because it is impossible that something really belonging to a thing should be the same as it and yet have no necessary connection either with it or with some third thing that it composes with it; for nothing is more connected than a thing with itself; hence if existence is identified with something, it cannot come to it through extrinsic participation but must belong to it through intrinsic identity; and if through identity, then through connection.

XIII. Nor can it be said that it is perfectly possible for some predicate to be accidental to something and yet to be identified with it, just as rational is accidental to animal and yet is identified with it when found in a human being. Against this Saint Thomas urges in Quodl. 2, a. 4, ad 1: "Because, he says, something is accidental to something in two ways: in one way as determinative of some essential principle, even though it does not fall within its definition — as rational is accidental to animal; in another way because it is neither part of its definition nor determinative of any essential principle — as white is accidental to human being; and it is in this second way that existence is accidental to a thing." Therefore it is impossible that something should be identified with something and be predicated of it contingently and accidentally, unless it is essentially determinative of it, even if it is not of its formal concept. And so this proposition cannot be challenged: that everything identified with something is either of its formal concept essentially, or is an essential determinative of it and constitutive with it of some third thing — as rational, though not of the formal concept of animal, is nevertheless the formal and essential determinative of it and constitutive of human being together with animal; and so where there is identification there is necessarily an essential connection either for constituting the thing itself or for constituting with it some third thing and determining and contracting it. But what has neither an essential connection by constituting something nor by determining it or constituting some third thing with it is in no way identified with it, because every identification demands some per se and essential connection with that with which it is identified, since nothing can belong to itself contingently and accidentally. Therefore, since existence is related to essence in such a way that it neither constitutes it as an essential predicate nor essentially determines it so as to constitute some third thing with it — because existence belongs per se and according to an essential connection to no created thing — it is manifestly deduced that existence is not identified with any created essence; because if all essential connection is

removed, all real identification is removed, and consequently it must be received as something distinct in the essence.

XIV. You will say: all of these arguments prove that existence is really distinguished from essence taken objectively and in the state of possibility, but not from actual essence, because the latter, by the very fact that it is actual, is also outside causes, and consequently is already understood to include existence in its concept; hence actual entity cannot be conceived without existence; whereas before it is actual it is in the state of possibility and so is nothing. Therefore essence is never taken as something real, positive, and outside nothing, and yet distinct from existence. But this objection labors greatly in equivocation, as we have already noted above, and contradicts itself by proving too much; for according to it, in no state can it be verified that existence belongs accidentally to essence, as is apparent by applying the same argument. For either essence is taken within causes and in the state of possibility, or outside causes and in the state of actuality. If in the first way, existence does not belong to it accidentally, because it is falsified of it — for the state of existing is opposed to the state of possibility, and so it is false to say that a possible essence exists; therefore it is not predicated of it accidentally. If it is taken in the second way, then existence is already of the concept of actual essence; for if existence is identified with actual essence because actual essence outside causes is presupposed and so existence cannot be predicated of actual essence except with identification, then it must necessarily be said that it is predicated of it essentially — because to say of an existent thing that it is existent is an essential concept if it is identical, since it is identified precisely insofar as it is said of essence as actual and existent. Now the objection labors in equivocation, because when we predicate existence of actual essence, either the aspect of the state of actuality can be reduplicated, or only the aspect of essence which underlies that state of actuality can be taken specificatively. If it reduplicates the state, the proposition becomes essential, because the sense is that insofar as it is actual or existent it is existent. But if it is taken only

specificatively, then existence is predicated accidentally of the essence itself even when it is actual, just as when it is said a human being is white, the word white is predicated of the human being insofar as it underlies whiteness — for it cannot be verified of a human being separated from whiteness — and if the phrase insofar as makes a reduplicative sense the proposition will be essential, because the sense is: a human being insofar as white is white; but if it is taken specificatively the predication is accidental of the human being, even though it is not verified of the human being except when it underlies whiteness. The same must be said of existence with respect to actual essence.

XV. But if you ask why it would not suffice for a thing to be said existent that it be subject to an agent or produced, without anything superadded; or at least why the dependence on an agent — which is a certain relation — would not suffice for the thing to be said existent by reason of such dependence and not by reason of another superadded form or actuality: it is replied that for a thing to be produced by an agent is taken either for some intrinsic ground that denominates, and this intrinsic element we call existence — for its formal effect is to place the thing outside causes in the achieved state of being — or it is taken for some extrinsic denomination, insofar as the thing is intrinsically denominated produced; and this does not suffice for it to be said existent, because for a thing to be existent cannot be an extrinsic denomination, since nothing denominates more intrinsically than being itself, which is intimately imbued in each thing rendering it real and placed outside causes on the part of the thing; and therefore something intrinsic is required through which the thing is formally rendered existent. Now dependence alone does not suffice: both because existence is said most of all from itself, since even the relation itself is not said to be existent by reason of the toward but by reason of the in; and because that relation of dependence must be real, and therefore will require an absolute foundation, and this cannot be the essence taken only for quidditative predicates — for these are of eternal truth and yet do not found

eternal existence — therefore something superadded must exist, newly participated from the agent, and this we call existence.

Existence is not a mode but a reality.

XVI. First to be rejected is the opinion of some who consider existence to be a real predicamental accident, namely duration, which they say pertains to the category of when, as Molina holds here, a. 4, disp. 2. But a manifest reason stands against this position: because a predicamental accident is sustained by a subject and inheres in it, and therefore presupposes existence and being in act in the subject — for an inhering accident gives being secundum quid and is sustained by being simply, which is substantial being — therefore it is repugnant that the first substantial being itself should be an inhering accident, that is, sustained by some being simply. And furthermore, an accident can give only accidental and inhering being; therefore if the first being of substance were an accident, substance would have its first being as accidental, and so substantial being would be accidental being, which is repugnant. It remains therefore that existence must be some formality or substantial reality, yet not so great as to be an essential and constitutive predicate of the essence or pertaining directly to a category. This is clear from what has been said above, because existence belongs to a nature already totally constituted and is accidental to it, and does not pertain to an essential predicate, nor can it stand as a grade or differentia or something entering into the constitution of the quiddity; otherwise it could found a proposition of eternal truth and the thing would be existent eternally and necessarily. Therefore it cannot be a predicate directly pertaining to a category, neither as genus nor as species or differentia, since it is superadded to the entire nature already constituted.

XVII. It remains therefore to see whether it is a reality superadded to essence or a mode. On this the same controversy arises as concerning subsistence, and nearly the same foundations can be employed. Some hold that it is distinguished from essence only as a mode, as Master Soto, II Physics, q. 2,

whom many follow. Others hold that it is distinguished from essence as a thing from a thing, which Master Báñez, I, q. 3, a. 4, dub. 2, considers much more probable, and he cites in favor of this opinion Capreolus, Cajetan, Ferrariensis, Soncinas, and others. And both positions are defended as probable in the Thomist school. To me, however, it seems that according to the principles of Saint Thomas, a somewhat greater distinction must be posited between existence and essence than between subsistence and nature. And so I incline more toward the opinion that existence adds a reality of the same genus as the existence whose reality it is — reduced to that category: namely if it is of a substance, a substantial reality; if of an accident, an accidental reality; if of a mode, a modal reality. This is the opinion of Cajetan, De Ente et Essentia, q. 11, ad 4 and ad 3.

XVIII. I am moved to this, first because it is the express teaching of Saint Thomas in Opusc. 48, the treatise On Substance, c. 2, where he says: "That existence and essence differ really, as two diverse things." Then, because I find in Saint Thomas a distinction between existence and subsistence, in that he says absolutely of existence that it composes with essence even in immaterial substances, in which he denies a composition from subsistence and nature, and yet in those same substances he allows that the supposit and nature are in some way distinguished — Quodl. 2, a. 4 — and we deduced above in a. 1 that subsistence is distinguished from nature as a mode; therefore according to Saint Thomas there is some greater distinction of existence from essence than of subsistence from nature, for where there is greater composition there must be greater distinction between the extremes. But between essence and being Saint Thomas pronounces absolutely that there is composition both in material and in immaterial things; therefore he presupposes an absolute distinction between essence and being. That this composition is given he allows in the passages cited above in this article. Similarly, Saint Thomas teaches absolutely that existence differs from essence and is other than it, which he does not usually affirm of things that are distinguished only modally

— of those he says only that they are in some way distinguished — as he says of the supposit and nature in the cited Quodl. 2. But of existence he teaches absolutely that it differs from essence, as in the same Quodl. 2, a. 3, and in Contra Gent. II, c. 51, and in II Sent., d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, and other passages cited above. And this weighs most heavily with respect to the mind of Saint Thomas, because he uses this manner of speaking when he intends a real distinction — namely to say absolutely that they differ — but not when he says in some way and in a certain manner, which expresses a modal distinction.

XIX. Then a reason is drawn from two things attributed to existence which seem especially to demand reality and for which a merely modal formality does not suffice. The first is that existence is the ultimate and supreme actuality with respect to every entity that can exist, while existence itself cannot be further actuated; but so great a perfection does not seem to be attributable to a merely modal entity, since a mode is the lowest among beings. The second is that existence is the very ground of all reality, for each thing is said to be a real being by its ordering to being, or because it has being, and with existence removed nothing remains but what is within causes; but it seems incongruous that the primary ground of all reality — by ordering to which all things are said to be real — should not itself be a reality but a mode. And indeed the first point — that existence is the ultimate and greatest actuality — will be shown more fully in the following article, where we shall treat of the perfection of existence; and in the meantime Saint Thomas may be consulted in q. 7 De Potentia, a. 2, ad 15, where he says: "That being is the actuality of all acts and the perfection of all perfections, and nothing is more formal than it," and the same is found in I, q. 4, a. 1, in the body, and in the q. De Anima, a. 6, ad 2, he says: "That essence is the first act, and existence the second act." And in Opusc. 15, c. 5, near the end, he says: "That a subsisting form is an act which is the participative form of the ultimate act, which is being." And the reason is that all things are in potency to being, and all

potentiality consists in the lack of some being: for something is in potency insofar as it does not have in act and in being that which it can have; and it is reduced to act by being rendered existent and outside causes. Therefore being of existence with respect to every entity having potentiality is act, and so it is the greatest actuality. And although it belongs to every being, it nevertheless belongs to it insofar as it expresses perfection and as removing its potentiality, and so it is always preserved that existence compared to the essence of which it is the existence perfects it and removes its potentiality, and so is more perfect than it, as will be said more fully below.

XX. The second thing we said is attributed to existence is sufficiently manifest in itself, since it is established that some being is said to be real only insofar as it can have existence, and then is actually outside nothing when it is existent; therefore without existence no reality is given, because what is nothing is not real. Therefore the primary ground of reality that separates and distinguishes from nothing is existence. It therefore seems incongruous that when an entity is not a mode but a reality, the primary ground and foundation of reality should be a mode.

XXI. From this, however, the difference between subsistence and existence is explained with respect to this point: that subsistence expresses a mode of existing by constituting the thing incommunicably and as existing through itself, whereas per se existence and incommunicability import a mode, because they are contrasted with the communicability of a part and the inherence of an accident; and communicability in a part pertains to the mode of being — that is, to the very state of the part — and not to its entity; inherence similarly pertains to the mode of being of the accident itself, through which it actually depends on the subject. Therefore subsistence, through which something is drawn out from the state of a part and of an accident and is constituted in the state of a total and complete substance, also pertains to the nature of a mode, because it is contrasted with the modes of

being of a part and of an accident. Similarly, the very effect of subsisting — which is to ultimately terminate nature — pertains more to a mode than to a reality, just as the terminus in quantity through figure and position pertains to the nature of a mode; and generally every termination pertains more to the state and mode of being than to some reality to be participated in. But existence, even though it is the ultimate act, is nevertheless not ordered to giving nature a state and the very mode of incommunicable termination, but to giving the ground of reality outside causes, and the formality or actuality of potentiality; for it is therefore called the ultimate act because it is the most formal. Subsistence, on the other hand, is called ultimate not because it is most perfect and formal, but because it provides incommunicability and termination or ultimation to nature, which pertains to the state or mode of being — namely, being with incommunicability. Thus the ultimate in the mode of incommunicable termination and the ultimate in the mode of actuality and the most formal act are so different that the one pertains to a mode or state, and the other to reality and the greatest actuality.

XXII. You will say: How then can the existence of the humanity in Christ be supplied by the existence of the Word in the view of Saint Thomas, if existence is not related in the manner of a terminating thing as subsistence is, but in the manner of an informing thing as act and form are? It is replied that existence, by the very fact that it is the ultimate and most perfect act in actuating, does not inform by constituting nature but by purely perfecting it in the manner of termination — even if it is a reality and not a mode — for existence is given to place some nature outside causes, and so it presupposes that nature constituted in its quiddity, and thus does not stand as a part of it or as a constitutive predicate; otherwise it would be per se connected with the nature and would not belong contingently to it. Therefore existence is a form that actuates and perfects, yet perfects per se and does not constitute; and such a form can be supplied by God even if it is a reality and not a mode, as is clear in the intelligible species — for God through himself intelligibly informs

the intellect of the blessed, because intelligible information is not given to constitute some third nature together with the intellect but purely to perfect the intellect in that intelligible genus, as Saint Thomas teaches in Contra Gent. III, c. 51, and as we shall explain below in Disp. 13. Therefore every information of a form that stands as a part in constituting some nature — whether substantial or accidental — is repugnant to God, because a part involves imperfection with respect to the whole, since every whole is greater than its part and every part less than the whole, and nothing can be greater than God. But a form that does not inform as a part — neither as an inhering accident nor as a substantial form — but stands as an act completing the very totality of the constituted thing, or determining it, and drawing the other extreme to its company and participation rather than being itself drawn to the constitution of some third thing: such a mode of actuating and determining is not repugnant to God, because it is a purely perfecting and non-constituting form, and to purely perfect is not repugnant to God even formally, as Saint Thomas says in the cited place, because it is less to inform than to terminate. Now existence is the form or act of the whole, not ordered to constituting some nature but to determining and placing outside causes the constituted thing, and so it is the act of the whole or supposit, as Saint Thomas teaches in III, q. 17, a. 2; and so where an extraneous supposit is posited, an extraneous existence is also posited which is proper to that supposit. Therefore, although existence does not terminate as a mode but as a true and proper reality, yet because it is the ultimate act in the manner of something completing and terminating — and not constituting nature — and thus actuates by purely perfecting and terminating, it can be supplied by God just as subsistence itself can, which is the terminus of nature, and just as the intelligible species, which terminates the intellect.

Solution to the Arguments.

XXIII. First, an argument is raised on the basis of Father Vázquez, III, q. 17, disp. 72, c. 2: in those cases where it is not established to us that one thing is really separated from another, or can be separated by divine power, it cannot be established that they are really distinguished, but rather that they are identified — since separation alone is the indication of a real distinction. But essence and existence cannot be separated: of existence it is manifest that it cannot stand without essence, for it would thus render nothing existent and produced, and it implies a contradiction for something to be produced in the achieved state of being — which is existence — and yet for nothing to be produced. Similarly, essence cannot stand without existence, because without existence nothing is in act except within causes. And although many necessary predicates are attributed to essences from eternity, yet these are not said of essence with the copula is denoting existence, but only a connection or consonance.

XXIV. Second, an argument is raised on the basis of Father Suárez, Metaph., disp. 31, sect. 1: existence is that by which a thing is said to be in act and outside nothing; therefore prior to existence the thing is nothing, as not being actually or really a being outside causes; therefore it cannot be really distinguished from existence as a double positive reality, but only as nothing and being — because by the very fact that essence is condistinguished from existence it is reduced to nothing, for it is condistinguished from that which is placement outside causes, and so it remains within them. Nor can it be said that essence is called a real being because it has a potency to receive existence and that this capacity constitutes a real essence; for against this: essence does not receive existence by a material reception and in a subjective potency, as a stone receives whiteness or heat, but is said to be in potency to existence quasi in an objective potency, because it can through the power of an agent be rendered existent; and this does not require a distinction of act from potency,

since the same thing that is now in potency comes into act through the fact that it is produced in act by an agent — not through receiving a distinct reality.

XXV. Third, an argument is raised because essence together with dependence on an agent is sufficiently understood as produced in the achieved state of being and therefore existent. The consequence is evident, because existence is nothing other than the placement of a thing in the achieved state of being outside causes. The antecedent is established, because for a thing to be said to be produced in becoming it suffices that it depend on the agent in the very becoming and flux; therefore for it to be produced in the achieved state of being it suffices that it depend in the achieved state of being; and so existence will add to essence nothing but the dependence of the essence on the agent, which is a certain relation, and not any absolute reality.

XXVI. Fourth, because otherwise there would be a real relation between existence and essence — since distinction is a certain real relation — but there cannot be a real relation between them, because essence as distinct from existence does not receive the relation nor can it give being to it or sustain it, since nothing sustains an accident in act except by means of existence.

XXVII. Fifth, because being is the formal effect of form — for it is form that gives being to a thing — and a formal effect is not distinguished from the form; therefore neither is existence or being distinguished from the form itself. And nearly all the arguments touching on this matter of the distinction between existence and essence press upon that principle: that essence without existence is nothing, is not a real or actual entity, and therefore cannot be really distinguished from existence, nor really receive it, nor compose with it, nor perform other similar operations that demand reality and actuality between the extremes. Indeed, essence terminates generation in no other way than existence does, because the terminus of generation is essence as existent

and not as standing prior to existence; therefore they are not really distinguished since they are produced by the same and in the same generation.

XXVIII. Finally, there may be added the arguments found in Cajetan, De Ente et Essentia, q. 10, which either prove that essence is not distinguished from existence because essence is in itself nothing and existence is also in itself indifferent to being or not being — since existence is not always given — or they prove that there is no composition between essence and existence because essence is in potency to itself in act, and the same thing in potency does not compose with itself in act; nor can a per se unity be made from essence and existence, because that third thing will also need existence, and consequently existence will again be distinguished from that third thing, and so the process will proceed to infinity. To this therefore nearly the whole force of the arguments proving that essence is not distinguished from existence is reduced. And nearly these same arguments proceed to prove that essence is not distinguished from existence as two realities but as a mode and a thing, because this distinction suffices to verify all those things that are said of existence and essence; therefore nothing more is required.

XXIX. To the first it is replied that even in those cases where we visibly see things separated with one remaining without the other, a real distinction can still be investigated from certain effects and predicates that demand a real distinction; for it is not established to us either that the intellect or the will can be separated and preserved separately from the soul, and yet we find their real distinction from sufficient effects and arguments. I say therefore that in the first place essence can be separated not from every existence but from this or that one determinately, and a created existence can be supplied through the divine one — just as subsistence is supplied in Christ — and we sufficiently gather the distinction of the latter from nature from the very fact that in Christ there is a humanity without its own personality, terminated through the personality of the Word. Similarly therefore, since in the view of Saint

Thomas the humanity of Christ exists through the uncreated existence of the Word as modified by the very personality of the Word, it must consequently be said that existence and essence can be distinguished — not because existence remains separated but because the proper existence is consumed or impeded while the essence remains under an extraneous existence, namely the divine one; for this suffices for finding a distinction between the one and the other, just as it is found between subsistence and essence, even though existence has a greater reality than subsistence for the reasons alleged above. Finally, although the separation of one from the other is the greatest sign of real distinction, it is nevertheless not the only one; for even where there is no separation there can be a distinction, since a sufficient foundation is found for not having an essential connection between them but only an accidental and contingent one — and especially because existence comes from an extrinsic principle really distinct from essence, namely from the agent whose production in the achieved state of being constitutes existence. And so if God were to impede one existence, another would result from the force of production in the unchanged essence, which is a sufficient sign of distinction on the part of the thing. Nor does Vázquez reply anything to this instance that stands in need of refutation, even though he brings it forward.

XXX. To the second it is replied by conceding that existence is that by which a thing is placed outside nothing and outside causes. And when it is inferred that prior to existence the thing is nothing and cannot be distinguished by a real distinction, it is replied: if the word prior is taken precisely and abstractively — separating, namely, the existence — we admit that the essence remains nothing and is not an extreme of a real distinction, just as Peter is not really distinguished from a possible Paul. But if the word prior is taken not separatively and precisely but only according to itself — such that essence is taken for the thing subjected to existence, not reduplicating the existence but specifying its reception — then existence and essence are distinguished as two realities found on the part of the thing under the same existence, which

actuates the essence and renders it existent not from itself but through reception of existence. Thus, for a real distinction between existence and essence it is not required that essence be considered as separated and removed from existence, but as underlying it — just as matter, naturally prior to every form, neither exists nor is anything, and yet by its nature is an entity really distinct from form. And similarly, natural corruptible things — for example, a human being — with accidents removed do not exist but are corrupted and remain nothing; therefore when they underlie accidents or dispositions they are not really distinguished from them: this consequence does not hold. Therefore between pure nothing and being existent through its own entity there is a middle: namely, being existent through reception of existence, and being of itself capable of having it; and this capacity is not nothing, because nothing is incapable of existing, being contradictorily opposed to it. Yet in order to be actually something, the capacity requires existence concomitantly, and exists under it not through identification with existence but through reception.

XXXI. And when it is urged that there cannot be a receptive potency for existence as there is for other accidents, because the subject is not presupposed as existent as it is presupposed for receiving accidents, it is replied — as we said above following Saint Thomas — that not only can there be a receptive potency because the subject already exists, but also a potency receptive of that by which it exists; although for receiving accidents in the manner of a subject sustaining them in being, existence must be presupposed in the subject insofar as the subject must have being simply in order to sustain the being of the accident secundum quid. But for receiving existence itself, through which the subject is simply constituted in being, it is not required that existence precede, but it suffices that it be received, and thus in reality it always concomitantly accompanies the receptive potency, giving existence to it and not presupposing it — because, as we have already said, the ground of receiving is not the actuality and existence of the subject but its potentiality; hence it can

perfectly well receive the existence itself through which the thing is rendered really and actually outside nothing, because receptive causality does not demand existence as preceding but as concomitant, in order that it be real. And so a created entity is not only in objective potency to be produced, but also while it is being produced it is produced as receptive of existence itself, through which it is constituted in the achieved state of being outside causes. Hence, although the same thing passes from objective potency to actual existence through the production of the agent, yet this very fact posits something in the entity itself that is distinct — through which it is formally rendered in the achieved state of being — because this formal and real effect is not an essential predicate or part of the entity but something contingently belonging to it from the production of the agent.

XXXII. To the third it is replied that dependence does not suffice as a pure relation without a foundation of such dependence; and the foundation cannot be precisely another relation, for that would also need another foundation, and so on to infinity; but one must arrive at something absolute that is the foundation. Now this cannot be the essence itself insofar as it precisely expresses quidditative predicates and essential connections, for these are of eternal truth — that is, necessary — and yet they do not from eternity found that dependence on the agent, or existence. Therefore this dependence must be founded in the essence or nature itself as it is changed and acted upon by the agent not only in becoming but also in the achieved state of being, because that dependence always perseveres and consequently so does its foundation; and such an intrinsic change belonging in the achieved state of being to the essence itself is called existence. And especially because, as we said above, existence is not a relative denomination but an absolute one, and most of all from itself — for each thing exists not toward another but in itself, to such a degree that the relation itself exists under the concept of in and not under the concept of toward. Therefore existence must be placed not in a mere relative dependence but in something absolute.

XXXIII. To the fourth it is replied that no inconvenience appears in there being a real relation between essence and existence, just as there is between matter and form; and although it is true that the subject of inherence in which such a relation resides is not matter alone or form alone but the composite, nevertheless the foundation is matter and form, which are also the extremes of the relation. Similarly, the relation of essence to existence is not subjectively in essence apart or in existence apart, but in the existing thing itself; yet the extremes and foundations between which the real relation is exercised are the essence and existence themselves — for to found a real relation, whether of distinction or dissimilarity or proportion or any other, it suffices that the essence in the thing truly exists as long as it underlies existence, just as matter with respect to form, even though it is not existent through itself. Thus by the very fact that it exists — whether through identification of existence or through formal reception — it is capable of a real relation even to existence itself, through which it is formally rendered existent.

XXXIV. To the fifth it is replied that being is the formal effect of form, speaking in general; but there is a double being: one of essence and one of existence. The being of essence comes from the form constituting nature and is its formal effect, because it is nothing other than that which in nature is related in the manner of an act constituting and not of a potency. The being of existence is also a formal effect of a form, but not of the constituting form which is a part of nature, but of a form supervening upon nature from the participation of the agent — and this is existence. And so it is preserved that all being comes from some form. Although we can also add that existence is considered in two ways: in one way absolutely, as it precisely has this effect of placing the thing outside causes; and so the being of existence does not in any way come from the constituting form but only from the terminating existence. In another way, existence is considered as limited and determined to such a species — for example, that it is the existence of a human being or of a horse — and such limitation existence has participatively from the nature of

which it is the existence. In this latter way there is no inconvenience in the being of existence, as limited and determined, being the formal effect of the form secondarily and participatively; yet it does not come from the form itself according to itself and absolutely but underlies the production of the agent and from it receives existence.

XXXV. And from these considerations the reply remains to what is raised concerning the reception of existence in essence and composition with it, etc. For reception does not require that existence precede in the recipient, but that it exist in the act of receiving, because from the very received form it has the first being; and so a concomitant existence suffices, and it suffices that it be conferred on the recipient through a form distinct from itself and not identified with it. Similarly, for composing it is not required that the composing extremes each have a distinct existence of their own; it suffices that they exist in reality and are actually outside causes, whether they have this through one or through several existences; indeed just as a single subsistence suffices for all the parts of a composite, so a single existence suffices — as we shall say in the following article. Similarly, for terminating generation it is not required that essence terminate separately and existence separately, but essence terminates generation as subjected to existence; for existence is not the thing produced as a quod, but is that by which essence is rendered produced and placed outside causes in the achieved state of being. Hence essence does not terminate generation except insofar as it is subjected to existence. Yet from this it does not follow that essence and existence are the same reality: both because the same action can reach several realities when they pertain to the same terminus — just as matter and form can be produced by the same creation, and nature together with its accidents or passions, and a body together with its quantitative parts, or a soul together with its organic parts — and also because when some thing is produced, it can be prevented from having its own proper existence by communicating to it the existence of the divine Person, as Saint Thomas considers to have happened in the humanity of

Christ; and this is a sufficient sign for us to say that there is a diverse reality — even though produced by the same action — because with respect to this part it can be impeded.

XXXVI. To the arguments proposed in Cajetan, the reply remains from what has been said. For we say that essence with existence removed is nothing, but under existence it is something, receiving being through existence and not through identification with it. Thus there is a middle between being nothing and being something existing through identification — namely, being existent through reception. As for what is said that existence itself is also indifferent to being or not being since it is a created entity, it is replied that existence is not indifferent to existing as a quo and formally — since in itself it is nothing other than the very ground and actuality formally providing being — yet it can cease to be denominatively and as a quod, insofar as when the nature of which it is the existence ceases, the reality of existence itself also does not remain. Yet it does not therefore require another existence superadded to it in order that it exist, because through itself it is the sufficient ground rendering the nature existent, and consequently itself, as long as the nature exists through it in dependence on the agent. As for the objection about composition, the reply has already been given: that this composition is made from essence and existence — not indeed from essence in the objective state, nor from essence identifying existence to itself, but from essence receiving existence while it is being produced and being joined to it. Hence the third thing that results does not need a distinct existence, because it is not an entity distinct from the essence and existence themselves; indeed by the very fact that it includes the existence of the nature, it includes the existence of that third thing which results from nature and existence, since it results from existence itself — and so it does not further require anything in order to be existent.

XXXVII. Finally, you will object, to prove that existence is not a reality superadded to essence: this is not general to every being, for a mode cannot

have an existence that is a reality, since it would thus be greater than the existing thing. Similarly, it is not apparent how accidents can be actuated by that reality distinct from themselves; and because otherwise the existence and the entity of which it is the existence would be of equal entity. Finally, in substances existence cannot be a reality, because thus it would need a union to the substance that is rendered existent — and this union cannot be one of inherence since existence is not an accident, nor a substantial union since it does not constitute the substance but comes to it already constituted. And concerning the union itself, if it is substantial, the difficulty arises again of how it is rendered existent, and concerning existence the difficulty returns of how it is united, and so on to infinity. This is confirmed, because if existence were really distinct from essence, it could be preserved by God without essence — for that is proper to things that are really distinguished — but this is impossible, since then existence could be given without the limited specification that it draws from essence, just as a figure cannot exist without quantity. Indeed, from this existence seems to import a mode and not a reality, because through it no nature is constituted but what is constituted is placed in a state — namely outside causes — and state pertains to mode; nor is it necessary to multiply entities without cause.

XXXVIII. It is replied that according to the mind of the holy Doctor in Quodl. 9, a. 3, it must be admitted that in accidents there is a distinct being or existence from substantial existence, because an accident does not pertain to the per se unity of substance and consequently not to its being either — since the unity of existence follows the unity of a being that is perfect and terminated. Although it is true that, as Saint Thomas notes there, accidental being does not belong to the accident itself as a quod but as a quo, while to the supposit belongs that accidental being as the principle quod and as having it. Therefore existence expresses a reality accommodated to the existing thing: if existence is only a mode, the existence resulting from it in the subject is modal; if it is a thing, nothing prevents existence from resulting that is a

reality. And when it results from a real accident, that existence — as specified and limited by the accident — is less perfect than the accident, though by the genus of its own actuality it is more perfect, as will be said in the following article. As for the existence of substance, we say that its reality is united to essence — for this is not difficult to understand, since it is established that the subsistence of the Word is united to the human substance, and also existence in the view of Saint Thomas. What wonder then that a created existence, which is a reality, should be united — not as a substantial form but as the terminus of substantial actuality? Nor does a process to infinity follow even granting a union that is a mode, for an existence of this kind, being modal, will not be united by a distinct union but will be joined as a mode and not as a reality, because it is the existence of a mode.

XXXIX. To the confirmation it is replied that some admit that existence can be preserved without essence. But this is difficult to grasp, for existence constitutes the thing produced in the achieved state of being, and it cannot be understood that something is produced in the achieved state of being while nothing is produced through that existence — for with existence removed, it renders no thing produced. We say therefore that not every reality can be separated from another: just as in the view of Saint Thomas matter cannot be separated from every form, nor a relation be given without a terminus, nor vision without an object, even though these are really distinguished from them. Therefore when some reality has an essential dependence in its actuality or specification on something really distinct from it, it cannot be preserved without that other — just as matter in participating the ultimate actuality, which is existence, depends on the intermediate, which is form; and existence in its specification depends on nature and form, and without a determinate limitation and specification it cannot determinately exist in the nature of things. To what is said about existence pertaining to state and mode, we have already said above that it does not pertain to a state modifying a reality but to constituting a reality in being, and to distinguishing it first and through itself

from what is nothing and within causes; and thus it rather provides the primary reality than a mode of reality.

ARTICLE IV.
Whether existence is unique and indivisible in the whole, and more perfect than nature itself?

These two difficulties are related and connected with one another: whether existence belongs indivisibly to the whole, and whether it is the act of the supposit itself, and belongs to the nature by means of the supposit; from which the way will be opened to resolving whether existence is more perfect in the order of actuality than essence.

Existence is indivisible.

I. Nearly the same reasoning must be followed in this part as above when treating of subsistence. For the sense is that existence, which belongs to a composite having parts, is not compounded from partial existences, but that very same unique existence immediately belongs to the composite, and by means of it to the parts from which the composite is assembled. This is taken from Saint Thomas, I-II, q. 4, a. 5, ad 2, where he says: "The being of the whole does not belong to any of its parts; hence either the part entirely ceases to be when the whole is destroyed, or if it remains, it has another being in act, just as a part of a line has another being than the whole line; but the human soul retains the being of the composite after the destruction of the body, and this is because the being of the form and of the matter is the same, and this same being is the being of the composite." He teaches the same in the passages where he affirms that supervening parts do not bring a new being, but that the being of the whole is communicated to them, as in I, q. 17, a. 2, and in II Sent., d. 1, q. 2, a. 4, ad 2.

II. Now this can be understood in two ways. In one way, that a single existence suffices for the entire composite, just as one substantial form suffices for the entire composite and its parts, although that form is rendered divisible per accidens by informing the parts of the whole, but not such that diverse forms, from which the form of the whole would be composed, are present in diverse parts — except per accidens, and in the manner in which it belongs to the form to have parts. In another way it can be understood that existence is unique in the composite and indivisible in informing, because it does not regard the whole and the parts equally, but regards immediately the unity of the whole, and regards the parts not absolutely as parts, but insofar as they are required for the unity of the whole. And such a form, although it is communicated to something divisible, namely to the composite itself and its parts, is nevertheless not divisible formally but only virtually, because it is communicated to the composite under an indivisible aspect — namely under the aspect of the ultimate terminus and the unity of the whole — even though it is communicated to something divisible. And for this reason in the De Anima, q. 2, a. 1, we distinguished among the forms of living things that some are divisible and some indivisible solely by reason of a different mode and aspect of informing; for although both a divisible and an indivisible form are communicated to divisible parts, nevertheless certain forms are communicated through a divisible information, which occurs when the form regards the parts and the whole in the same way, as in homogeneous things. But sometimes a form informs in an indivisible mode, even though it reaches all the parts and is participated in by them, because it regards several parts under an indivisible aspect, insofar as it either requires several parts in the manner of a single disposition — as the form of a living thing, which regards the body as organic in order to inform it — or because it regards all the parts in the manner of an ultimate terminus, and the aspect of what is ultimate is indivisible, even though it is said to be virtually divisible, because under that indivisible aspect it is communicated to the parts, yet it is not formally divisible, because it is not composed and assembled from many parts, just as

the terminus of a line terminates all the parts of the line, and the form of fire requires eight degrees of heat for its disposition, yet in four degrees the middle form is not found.

III. Therefore it must be said that existence in composite things is both unique and indivisible in the manner in which forms are said to be indivisible by reason of their indivisible mode of informing, although it is virtually divisible insofar as, by rendering the composite existent, it actuates and reaches all the parts of which the composite is constituted. And the reason is the same by which we proved above in the second article that subsistence is unique in the entire composite and is not assembled from nor composed of partial subsistences; and below we shall prove that existence is the proper act of the supposit, and that there are no partial existences from which the existence of the whole would be assembled. Now this is not difficult to understand, given what we have already proven in the preceding article: that existence is not identified with the entity but supervenes upon an entity that has been constituted, by placing it outside causes; and consequently it is related as the ultimate and total terminus of the entire actuality of the whole, because it is that which ultimately places the thing outside causes. Thus, that existence is unique in the entire composite is grounded in this: that parts, as parts, do not exist with a partial existence but with the existence of the whole, because no production comes to rest in the parts as parts, but in some whole, whether perfect or imperfect. This is clearly evident, because parts as parts are produced only insofar as they tend toward the whole and perfect it; for this is what it means to be parts — not to rest in themselves but in the whole. Therefore it implies a contradiction that any production should regard a part as a part and come to rest there. But if the parts are not produced as part of some whole but separately from it, by that very separation they cease to be parts and a whole is formed. Therefore no production terminates in the achieved state of being except in some whole, although it may happen that diverse complete things are produced from which another whole is again

constructed, and with respect to that last whole the prior productions are called partial; yet in truth, when they occur, they are total in their own order. Now existence does not follow upon production except in the achieved state of being, since its formal effect is to constitute the thing outside causes in the achieved state of being; therefore existence is found only where production comes to rest in the achieved state of being; but it comes to rest in some whole and not in the parts as parts; therefore there are no partial existences, nor are they multiplied in accordance with the multiplication of parts, but in any whole a single existence suffices for it and for its parts, as will be explained more fully just below.

IV. That existence is indivisible in the very mode of informing is deduced from this very fact: that existence does not regard the parts and the whole equally, but regards immediately and through itself the whole in the manner of a single produced thing placed outside causes in the achieved state of being, whereas it places the parts outside causes insofar as they are contained in the whole itself and insofar as they pertain to its unity and communication — because, as has been said, existence is not identified with the entity of the parts or of the whole, but as a distinct actuality it supervenes upon the essence by reason of participation in the agent that places the thing ultimately in the achieved state of being outside causes. Therefore it presupposes the thing constituted according to its parts, from which its essence is constructed; therefore it does not regard the parts as primarily and equally as the whole itself, but regards the whole as constituted and supervenes upon it; and thus its actuation, under an indivisible aspect — that is, under the aspect of the ultimate — is directed to the whole, and it is said to be only virtually divisible, insofar as by communicating itself to the whole it is also communicated to the parts that compose the whole, by participation and mediately. And so it is necessary to distinguish carefully between forms that belong first to the parts and by means of them to the whole, and those that belong, conversely, first and through themselves to the whole and through the whole to the parts; for

the former are said to be formally divisible because they are assembled from parts; the latter, however, are only virtually divisible, and their information takes place in an indivisible mode because they regard the whole itself under the aspect of the whole and of what is ultimate, and so they draw the parts to participation in themselves. And in this way existence is related in the order of actuality even in composite things, as has been proven; for in spiritual things it does not have parts even virtually, because the whole itself does not consist of parts, nor is it communicated to them. Therefore the information or actuation of existence is indivisible, because it regards the whole first and through itself, not by reason of the parts but as something complete and in the manner of ultimation and termination; and the aspect of what is ultimate is always indivisible, even though it regards the parts, just as a point regards a line. Now existence, in regarding the whole, also regards the parts mediately and by participation, insofar as they are found in the whole.

V. But you will object: it cannot be understood how the existence of a corporeal thing can be whole in the whole and whole in the parts — a thing we find extremely difficult to understand even in spiritual things, and how much more so in corporeal existence. Therefore either it must be divided according to the parts, as corporeal nature itself is divided, or it is present in only one part and not in the rest, and so only that one part would exist and not the others — apart from the fact that there is no greater reason for it to be in one part than in another. And in heterogeneous parts, since each part has a distinct being, they cannot be informed by a single existence. This is confirmed, because the existence of a body is in truth something corporeal, since it receives determination and limitation from the very essence of which it is the existence; therefore it must be divided with the division of that essence; nor is existence more indivisible than the form or nature from which it derives, for since being is the act of being as being, where there are several entities actually outside causes there must be several existences; but there are several parts actually in the composite itself; therefore there must be several

existences. And lest it be said that existence belongs to substance prior to quantity and is thus indivisible: against this it is urged, first, that substance itself, when quantity supervenes, is distinguished into parts and therefore so also is existence; second, because we can speak of the existence of quantity itself, to which it belongs per se to have parts; therefore the existence belonging to it will also have parts.

VI. This is confirmed a second time: the existence of an angel is simpler than that of a stone, because the substance of an angel is simpler than the substance of a stone; therefore likewise the existence of a stone will be more composite than the existence of an angel. Therefore composition is not repugnant to existence; but just as existence is limited and diminished by the essence of which it is the existence, so also existence will be rendered composite and divided into parts like corporeal essence itself, for in this no impossibility or repugnance appears; indeed, it is deduced from the very nature of existence, because by reason of its transcendence it is imbued in every grade and in every part. Therefore there is no repugnance in the existence of a part or lowest grade composing with the existence of a more perfect part or grade, just as the entity of a part and grade composes with the entity of another grade and part.

VII. It is replied that all of these arguments prove that existence is divisible participatively and virtually, but not formally — that is, by virtue of its own information or mode of informing — which can also be expressed by saying that it is divisible and extended in quantity per accidens; for Saint Thomas so calls it in I De Caelo, lect. 6, where he says: "The being of a thing can be said per accidens extended in quantity by reason of the subject which has a determinate quantity." Since therefore existence does not inform the entity of the whole in a divisible mode — because it does not regard the whole and the parts equally but regards the parts only insofar as they share in the mode of totality and unity terminated in the whole — therefore existence is not said to be extended in quantity by virtue of its own information, as though it first

informed the parts and from the parts the whole; rather, by informing the whole under the very indivisible aspect of totality, it also informs the parts as contained therein. When therefore it is said that existence is not whole in the whole and whole in the parts but whole in the whole and a part in the parts, I reply that it is whole in the whole and inadequately or participatively in the parts, not divisively, because since it expresses the aspect of what is ultimate it is indivisible. Hence it is in the parts in the way that a point is in the parts of a line, in which it is not formally extended but virtually, by terminating them all; and filiation belongs to the entire generated animal, yet not every part of it is called a son, because that accident properly belongs to the whole itself, and belongs to the parts not partially but insofar as they are one in the whole. Therefore a terminating form is not formally quantified by its subject, whereas a form informing in a partial and divisible mode of its subject is indeed thus quantified.

VIII. But if you press: being is said to be extended in quantity per accidens, as Saint Thomas says in the passage cited, whereas a point is not said to be extended in quantity per accidens because it terminates the parts of a line; therefore existence does not stand in relation to the whole as a point does, but as whiteness does, which is extended and quantified per accidens; and so it is not repugnant for there to be partial existences just as there are partial whitenesses. It is replied that being is said to be extended in quantity per accidens with respect to denomination, because all the parts are denominated as existing, just as all the parts are denominated white; and in this respect the example of the terminating point does not hold, for it does not denominate the individual parts as terminated and divided in themselves. But the example holds in this respect: that existence is not extended to the extension of the parts as whiteness is, even though it actually denominates all of them and places them outside causes — for the reason that it follows upon production in the achieved state of being, and this directly reaches the whole, for it is there that production is completed and perfected; and existence does not denote

just any production, but production in the achieved state of being, and therefore a perfect and settled production, which does not belong to each individual part but to the whole, even though in that act it denominates all the parts placed outside causes. Therefore in those things that are related in the manner of a terminus, one is not to assign whole in the whole and part in the part; rather, the whole is terminated in the manner of what is ultimate, and this ultimate is said to be indivisible, even though it reaches and denominates the parts inadequately and virtually, that is, mediately.

IX. To what is said regarding whether existence is in one part only or in all, we say that it is in all, insofar as they are one whole and in the manner of a terminated totality, and not in one part alone; yet it is not divided through the parts, but by holding itself terminatively toward the whole it actually places and denominates all of them outside causes. As for what is said about heterogeneous parts, the reply is easy: they do not have a diverse existence but one and the same existence communicated in a diverse manner, because the parts themselves are of diverse quality and condition; and just as there is no repugnance in the same soul informing all those parts on account of the eminence of such a form, so neither is there repugnance in the same existence actuating them, derived from the same form with a like perfection and eminence.

X. To the first confirmation it is replied that the existence of a body and of quantity is similarly corporeal, but in the manner of a terminating form and consequently possessing indivisibility, just as every terminus is indivisible even though it terminates parts; and so just as a point or line terminates the parts of a quantity and affects them, and yet is not formally divided through them, so there is no repugnance in existence — even though it is corporeal or quantitative — actuating all the parts by terminating them and yet not formally dividing itself through them, because it is related in the manner of a terminus in the order of actuality, even though it is corporeal, just as are a line

and a point. And when it is said that existence is the act of being as being, I distinguish: as being is perfect and placed outside causes in the manner of a whole, I grant it; as it is imperfect and incomplete and tends toward the whole in the manner of a part, I deny it. For existence belongs to a part only mediately, insofar as it is in the whole and by participation from the whole; immediately, however, it is the act of the whole; and thus every being is capable of existence, but not equally and in the same manner — some immediately and formally, others mediately and participatively, as will be explained more fully presently.

XI. To the second confirmation it is replied that the existence of an angel is simpler than that of a body, because it is more abstract from matter, and so it is not extended to parts either immediately or mediately, since the whole which is actuated in the angel through existence does not consist of parts, and so neither does existence extend itself to them. And when it is said that there is no repugnance in existence being divided into parts just as it is limited and determined by the essence of which it is the existence, it is replied that this is indeed repugnant, because existence is a terminating act as the ultimate actuality of the produced thing, and from the nature of a terminus — since it expresses the aspect of what is ultimate — it belongs to it not to be divided but to terminate in an indivisible mode. To what is said about existence transcending through all grades, and while actuating the lowest grade remaining in potency to the existence of a higher grade, it is replied that existence never has potentiality in the order of existence with respect to further perfection or being. Hence Saint Thomas says, q. 7 De Potentia, a. 2, ad 9: "It is not to be understood that something is added to what I call being which would be more formal than it and determine it as act determines potency." And in I, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3, he says: "Being is the actuality of all things, and even of the forms themselves; hence it is not related to other things as what receives to what is received, but rather as what is received to what receives." The reason is that existence is that by which something is rendered

in the achieved state of being and ultimately outside causes; but if there were given an existence that was still in potency to another existence, it would be in potency to being outside causes, and so it would not yet be existent or in the achieved state of being. Therefore existence actuates all the grades of the thing in which it is, but in the manner of the ultimate terminus; and so if only the lowest and most imperfect grade is given, existence will be accommodated to that alone and will actuate it in an indivisible mode. But if there are several more perfect grades, it will immediately and formally actuate that whole which is constituted from those grades, terminating it in an indivisible mode or in the manner of what is ultimate; whereas it will reach the inferior grades, as also the parts themselves, mediately and participatively, insofar as they pertain to that whole and are found in it.

Existence is the immediate act of the supposit.

XII. The sense is that the supposit is related as the receiving principle quod of existence, and nature as the principle quo, but with this difference from accidental forms: although the supposit is also the sustaining and receiving principle quod of accidental forms, the nature itself is nonetheless the medium of receiving accidents, so that they belong to the supposit by means of nature and denominate it, and it is not necessary that they modify the supposit itself by inhering in it, but only the nature — as is manifestly evident in the accidents belonging to Christ the Lord, which do not inhere in the supposit nor modify it, but denominate it by means of the humanity. But existence does not belong to the supposit by means of nature; rather, it immediately regards the supposit as the principle quod and as the ground of reception, because to be produced terminatively and in the achieved state of being belongs only to the whole or supposit, and by means of the whole it belongs to the nature. Nature, however, is said to be the principle quo of existence with respect to its specification and determination, because the fact that a given existence is of such and such a species — for example, human, or

angelic, or of some other kind — is taken from the nature of which it is the existence; for which reason Saint Thomas says, I, q. 50, a. 5, that being belongs to a form through itself, as roundness belongs to a circle; which is understood either of existence as specified and limited to such a nature — for example, existence as human or angelic — in which sense it has this from the form, or it is understood that being follows from form not absolutely but as subject to production and subsisting in itself or inhering in something, for in this sense it properly belongs to the form as produced, as Cajetan explains in III, q. 17, a. 2, ad 8. See also what we said in the De Anima, q. 9, a. 1.

XIII. That therefore existence is the act properly corresponding to the supposit is expressly stated by Saint Thomas in I, q. 17, a. 2, and in III Sent. ad Annibald, d. 6, q. unica, a. 2, and Quodl. 9, a. 3, as we already weighed above in article 2, where we also adduced the argument to prove it; and it is derived principally from the very production or generation of things. For existence is that by which something is said to be produced in the achieved state of being; therefore there will be a single existence wherever there is a single production terminated in the achieved state of being; but with respect to one supposit or whole there is a single generation, not composed of partial actions; therefore there is also a single existence not composed of partial existences. The consequence is evident, because existence is the very achieved state of being of generation; therefore if generation is one, a single achieved state of being corresponds to it. The minor premise is proved because generation does not cease nor is it completed in the achieved state of being until it has perfected the whole itself, nor does it come to rest in a part as a part, because it has not yet reached its adequate terminus, and a part as a part is not the adequate terminus of generation. But if generation does come to rest in a part and does not perfect the whole itself, by that very fact generation is rendered imperfect and defective; and by the very fact that generation comes to rest in some part, that part is separated from the others and a whole is formed, though an imperfect one. Therefore wherever generation comes to

rest, it comes to rest in some whole or supposit, whether perfect or imperfect. Therefore the achieved state of being is not found except in the whole or supposit; therefore existence is proper to the supposit or whole, because existence is to be placed in the achieved state of being and perfectly outside causes, not in becoming and in tending.

XIV. You will say: the humanity of Christ is truly and formally produced, and its being produced is not had from the existence of the Word, because the existence of the Word cannot formally constitute a created being; therefore neither can it constitute something produced outside causes; therefore in the humanity of Christ there is a formal effect of existence which does not follow from the supposit — namely the effect of a created existence. It is replied that humanity is properly not produced as a quod but as a quo; hence it is not rendered produced in the achieved state of being through its own existence, because the production was not terminated and completed in the humanity, but was supplied and perfected in existing through the very assumption. Humanity is therefore said to be produced as a quo on account of the dependence it has on the action and conservation of God, which, although it did not give it existence in the achieved state of being, yet through another action — namely the assumptive action — the Person and existence of the Word were communicated to it; and just as having a Person communicated in this way depends on God's action, so also does having an existence communicated in this way; and this existence communicated in this way through God's action renders the nature outside causes and dependent not through a created existence but through the uncreated existence communicated to it in time. For the assumption into the divine subsistence prevented the creative action from giving a complete terminus of existence, and the divine existence supplied for the created one, as will be said at greater length in the treatise on the Incarnation.

XV. And because being belongs to nature only as to a principle quo, not as to something having its own being and as a principle quod, the difference must be noted between personal predicates — for example, existence, subsistence, filiation, and the like — and other accidental predicates that are said to belong by reason of nature; for although all of them belong to the supposit as to the principle quod and as to the subject of denomination and inherence, yet in some of them the nature itself is the ground of belonging or the medium of reception, whereas in others the ground of belonging and reception is the supposit, even though nature is the principle quo with respect to the specification or limitation of such a predicate. Nature is said to be the ground of belonging or receiving a predicate when either the connection with that predicate is founded in the nature itself, or the predicate cannot belong except by means of something pertaining to nature; as operation cannot belong except by means of a power, and this only by means of nature, which is the root of the power and the first principle of motion; and similarly color cannot belong except by means of a surface, and this only by reason of corporeity. The supposit, on the other hand, is said to be the ground or medium of belonging when the entire foundation of belonging is taken not from the nature itself but from an extrinsic cause reaching directly to the supposit; and thus stand existence and filiation, because existence — as has been said often — is the very production in the achieved state of being and placement outside causes, and filiation is the relation of the generated to the father, or of the propagated to the one propagating. Now the supposit is that which is produced first and through itself, and thus existence — which constitutes what is produced in the achieved state of being — belongs first and through itself to the supposit; while the parts of nature are said to co-exist but not to exist simply, except by reason of the whole. And the reason is that existence is that which places the thing simply outside causes, whereas no part as a part is placed absolutely outside causes but dependently on its co-part and on the whole; for if it were placed outside causes independently, by that very fact it would be a whole and not a part. As long therefore as something depends on

another further thing in order to be placed simply outside causes, it does not have existence in itself, because it does not have the condition of being placed simply outside causes, since it depends on some further thing in order to be so placed. Therefore, in order to be perfectly and simply placed outside causes and to be existent, it is required to be rendered independent of anything further; and this properly is the whole and the hypostasis, because in this it is opposed to the part — for it is not communicable to a further terminus, whereas a part is communicable. Therefore that which is simply rendered existent is the whole; the rest are said to co-exist, including accidents themselves, which are sustained in the supposit as though from it they have that from which they need depend no further in existing and in placement outside causes.

XVI. Therefore existence simply — as distinguished from co-existence — is the act of the supposit or whole; and it belongs to the parts participatively, insofar as it renders them outside causes by co-existing with the whole. Authors of the opposing view understand this in the contrary manner, namely that the parts and whatever being, as it is distinguished from another through its own entity by which it is a real being, is also outside nothing and existent, and the whole results from the parts and thus the total existence also results from them. We, however, say that to a part as a part it does not formally belong to exist but only participatively — that is, to co-exist — because to a part as a part it is repugnant to be made or to exist except as dependent on another further thing, not as terminating in itself and containing in itself the achieved state of being and its own placement outside causes. Therefore, before that on which it depends as on something further, it does not exist in itself but only co-exists in another, or tends toward existing in it; whereas that which does not depend on a further terminus in order to be placed in being is said to exist simply, and so its existence alone places it simply outside causes, because as long as something depends on another in order to be, without that other it is not yet; but when it no longer requires anything,

then it simply is. Finally, existence is that which places outside causes ultimately and in the achieved state of being; otherwise, if something is lacking for it to be outside causes, it is not said to exist. Therefore existence cannot be composed of other existences. The consequence is evident: for a composite as such includes several things from which it is composed, but the ultimate terminus cannot be composed of several things; it must rather be simple and indivisible, because what is ultimate is that beyond which there is nothing. But if it included several things, once one of them is taken, something further remains; therefore, in order that nothing further remain, it must not have several things but a single, ultimate, and final being; and thus it must not be composite insofar as it is ultimate. Therefore existence, by the very fact that it is the ultimate act — that is, the act placing ultimately and in the achieved state of being outside causes — is not composite. See further, q. 7 Physics, a. 5, where we also said how the rational soul, notwithstanding that it is a part, has existence, and yet that existence does not compose with the existence of matter some third thing; rather the very same existence of the form is communicated to matter and to the composite, as Saint Thomas teaches in I-II, q. 4, a. 5, ad 2. For it is special to the rational soul that, while being a composing part, it is also in itself a subsisting or per se existent form. Hence it not only communicates itself to matter as a form, but also communicates its existence to the whole and to the parts, and carries that same existence with it when it is separated, although in that state it is not the being of a human being but the being of a spirit, because there it is not being communicated to the body and constituting a human being, but being in separation.

Existence is simply a more perfect actuality than essence.

XVII. This difficulty has a place only in the opinion of those who really distinguish essence from existence; for those who say they are the same cannot make a comparison between the one and the other, since there one and the

other are not found. In this opinion, therefore, certain Thomists hold that existence from its own genus is more perfect than essence; on which see Báñez in the present place, Navarrete, controversy 14, Ledesma, q. 12 on the being of God, and others. Some, on the contrary, say that existence is simply less perfect than essence — taking essence, however, not in the state of possibility, for in that state it is nothing, but in the state of production; and so, given the state outside causes which is had through existence, and comparing in that state the essence which is the thing having that state and the existence which is the ground of giving that state, they say that essence is more perfect than existence. This opinion is defended by several, and most recently by Master Biescas, I, q. 3, a. 4, dub. 12; but his foundational argument was rejected above, because he considers that the existence which is distinct from essence does not constitute essence in act outside causes — for this, he says, belongs to essence by reason of its own actual entity — while existence constitutes the thing not absolutely outside causes but in the order of being through itself or in another, as he affirms below, q. 4, a. 1, dub. 3. But this is to confuse existence with subsistence or inherence, and to fail to distinguish the actuality by which the thing is outside causes from the essence itself; and this is precisely what the opposing opinion intends, and nothing more, for it takes existence for the actuality of being through itself or in another, and so it agrees with the present opinion in not distinguishing that actuality from essence — which we rejected above and will touch on further in the following disputation.

XVIII. For the resolution, therefore, it must be noted, following Cajetan, below q. 7, a. 1, that the actuality of form and the actuality of being or existence are related differently; for form is the act constituting something in a determinate genus and species, and so by its proper nature it has the limits of its determinate perfection; but being or existence, from its own proper and formal concept, is not a form constituting something in a determinate species or genus, but rather places the constituted thing outside causes — which

indeed is an actuality and consequently a perfection, but that it is such and such a degree of perfection must be measured and derived from the nature and essence to which it is attached; for example, the existence of a human being is more perfect than the existence of a stone, with a perfection and limitation derived from the nature of which it is the existence. For from its own concept existence expresses only the actuality removing the potentiality by which something is within causes, and so it places the thing outside them, but not any constitution out of genus and differentia which pertains to quiddity; for existence is an actuality outside quiddity itself, because it has no essential connection with any created thing but belongs by the free participation of God alone. From this it follows that the determination of perfection found in existence must not be taken by reference to its proper genus and differentia, which are the intrinsic termini of quiddity, but by reference to its ordering to the subject it affects, because — as we shall say in the seventh question — every form or nature can be limited and determined in its perfection only from two sources: either by reference to the intrinsic termini by which quiddity is constituted, by reason of which one species differs from another in perfection because it has a more perfect genus or a more perfect differentia; or alternatively, a form is limited and determined by its ordering to the subject in which it is received, for everything is received according to the mode of the recipient, just as whiteness is less perfectly in a human being than in snow by reason of the different mode of the recipients. Since therefore existence cannot determine and limit its perfection in the first manner — as something placed per se in a category according to a determinate genus and differentia, because it is rather an actuality essentially belonging to no created being — it remains that its perfection is limited and determined in the second manner, as something reducible to that category, or to that genus and species of the essence in which it is received.

XIX. This being supposed, it is replied that if existence is considered from its own genus and from the precise concept of its actuality — which is to place

the thing outside causes — setting aside everything from which it is limited and received, which is extraneous to it, existence is more perfect than essence, because it is compared to essence as second act to first act, as Saint Thomas says in III Sent. ad Annibald, d. 6, q. unica, a. 2. However, if existence is considered according to its specific and determinate perfection, which it participates from the essence of which it is the existence, then without doubt essence is more perfect, because the specification itself and the determinate perfection is had participatively in existence and essentially in the essence itself. And in accordance with this twofold consideration, one finds in Saint Thomas that sometimes being is the most perfect and most formal among all actualities, as he teaches in q. 7 De Potentia, a. 2, ad 9, and in this I, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3, and a. 2, ad 1, q. 7, a. 2, and q. 9, a. 1. And the reason has been already touched on above: that being is the second and ultimate act in the entitative order, whereas all other forms are related as first act and in potency to existence; for all created forms or natures are in potency to being and can pass from non-being to being, and they are in a state of imperfection insofar as they lack some being or existence — that is, insofar as they do not yet actually have something they can have. But then something is actually perfect when it has the actual existence of its nature, or of that thing or perfection which it requires to have. Existence is therefore the ultimate actuality desired in each thing, and so every form is ultimately perfected and actuated through existence; therefore existence in the order of actuality is more perfect than all forms, since it actuates all of them.

XX. Nor can it be said that the being of existence is more perfect than all forms with a perfection that is merely secundum quid, because it actuates them in an accidental mode — just as accidents also actuate substance and substance is in potency to them, yet accidents are not more perfect than substance. Moreover, some reply to Thomas that when he says being is the most perfect and most actual of all things, he speaks of being not for existence alone but as it also includes essence in the produced act, and so he compared

being together with existence to essence itself in the state of possibility, and thus there is no doubt that it is more perfect than that; but Thomas did not compare existence with actual essence, which is subject to it in act, when he said existence is more perfect. Or, thirdly, one may say that if we compare created existence to created essence, such existence is intrinsically limited and consequently is less perfect than essence, as we shall say presently; but if existence is taken for the divine existence, it is certainly more perfect than any created essence. Therefore there is no basis for affirming that some existence in particular and determinately is more perfect than essence, speaking of created existence. To the first instance it is replied that existence does not stand as a predicamental accident, as we have already said above, even though it is a predicable accident because it is said contingently of every created thing. Hence the forms and natures that are in potency to existence are not in potency to it as to an actuality that is merely secundum quid, as substance is in potency to the accidental forms it sustains — for such accidental forms presuppose that the subject has being simply, while remaining in potency to a form from which they do not have being simply but a being superadded to their own proper being, and such being is secundum quid. But to substantial existence, form or nature is related in such a way that, with existence removed, it has no being whatsoever, and through existence it has being simply, whereas with accidents removed it still has being simply. Therefore it is incorrectly said that essence is in potency to existence as to an actuality that is merely secundum quid.

XXI. To the second instance it is said that this explanation does not preserve the sense of Saint Thomas. First, because he says that being is the actuality of all things and even of the forms themselves and of all actualities, as is clear from the passages cited above; but if he takes being as including both essence and existence, the aforementioned comparison cannot be made — that it is the actuality of all actualities and forms — because besides existence and essence nothing remains with respect to which existence could be said to be an

actuality, except only with respect to the state of possibility; and for that, it is not required that something be most perfect and most formal, for the smallest entity, however imperfect, by the very fact that it is produced is more perfect than every possible thing and form; yet we do not for that reason affirm that any smallest entity is the actuality of all actualities and the most formal among all forms. Second, because Saint Thomas says that what he calls the most perfect and most actual of all is not what receives but what is received in essence — as the being of a human being is received in a human being, as is clear below in q. 4, a. 1, ad 3 — but existence is not received in possible essence but in produced essence subjected to existence itself and placed outside causes through it, just as the soul is received in the body that has been organized and formed through it; for it is the act of an organic body, and without the soul the body is organic only equivocally, like a dead body or a statue. Therefore Saint Thomas does not compare existence and essence to possible forms but to produced ones — that is, to those subjected to existence itself through production. Finally, Saint Thomas compares the actuality of existence to other forms and says that being itself is the most actual of all, so as to infer from this that God is infinite in being, since He is being itself without reception in anything, as is clear below in q. 7, a. 1; but if he were speaking of the being of essence and existence together with respect to possible forms, he could not infer this infinity of the divine being, both because with respect to possible things any essence and any existence is more perfect than anything in the state of possibility — so that from the perfection and actuality of being itself over all other forms he would not infer the supreme and infinite perfection of the divine being, since in order to be more perfect than possible forms precisely as they are in the state of possibility, infinite perfection is not needed but only placement outside nothing — and also because Saint Thomas infers infinite perfection in God even with respect to all existing things; indeed, even if all possible things were to exist, God would still be more perfect than all of them. But with respect to existing things, that comparison cannot be made — that being is more actual and more perfect

than every form — unless one distinguishes between existence, which is more perfect, and essence, which is not so perfect. Therefore Saint Thomas undoubtedly takes existence as distinguished from essence when he says that it is more perfect.

XXII. To the third instance it is said that we are speaking of created existence, but in it we distinguish a twofold concept: namely, what it expresses precisely from its own genus — that is, the actuality not constituting nature but placing outside causes — and what it has from the participation of the essence and nature of which it is the existence; as, for example, that it is a human or angelic existence. This is as if in heat we were to distinguish the perfection it has from its own genus from the perfection it has from participation or reception in such a subject, for example in fire or in an animal; and according to the first consideration we say that existence is an actuality more perfect in itself than essence, while according to the second it is not, because from essence it derives such participation, as we now say.

XXIII. As to the second part, our conclusion is proved because Saint Thomas often affirms that being as participated in the essence of such and such a species has imperfection in accordance with the mode of that essence, as he says in I-II, q. 2, a. 5, ad 2: "If being itself is considered as participated in this or that thing, which does not encompass the whole perfection of being but has imperfect being — such as the being of any creature — then it is manifest that being itself together with added perfection is more eminent." And in q. 20 De Veritate, a. 2, ad 3, and in this I, q. 4, a. 2, ad 3, he teaches, following Dionysius, that "although being itself is more perfect than life, and life itself more perfect than wisdom itself — if these are considered according to the way they are distinguished by reason — yet a living thing is more perfect than a being that is merely being, because a living thing is also a being, and a wise thing is both a being and a living thing." Finally, according to Saint Thomas, essence or form stands as the principle and ground of existence, and existence

as its effect and complement, as he teaches in I, q. 42, a. 1, ad 1, and q. 50, a. 5, and I-II, q. 111, a. 2; but it is impossible that what stands as the effect and accessory or complement of another be more perfect than its principal. Since therefore the specific and essential ground is per se and principally in the nature itself, it is necessary that existence — which participates the specific perfection of essence only participatively and accessorily — be in that respect less perfect than it.

XXIV. But from this there seems to arise an argument for proving that essence is simply more perfect than existence; for perfection simply is taken from the essential and quidditative ground of a thing, since the excess of perfection of one over another is considered in itself; but it is established that essential perfection is taken from essence and not from existence — for a human being is said to be more perfect than a stone by reason of the essence in which it surpasses it, whereas an existing Peter is not said to surpass a non-existing Paul as a human being surpasses a stone. Therefore the mere excess of existence is not greater than the excess between two essences of distinct species; therefore this is a sign that existence is not more perfect than essence. This is confirmed, because otherwise essence would simply be ordered to existence as to something more perfect, and not existence to essence; and so when the divine Word assumed human nature and not existence, He assumed what was less perfect, namely existence. It is confirmed a second time, because operation is derived from essence and its nobility, and therefore the operation of an intellectual nature is most perfect; but operation is not derived from existence, nor is the nobility of a thing, for existence is common to every being of however low a grade. Similarly, that power is higher and more perfect which abstracts more from existence, as the intellect is nobler than the will, because the intellect does not depend on existence as the will does, which regards only being and does not abstract from it. Therefore essence is more perfect than existence. Finally, it is impossible that something be nobler from its genus and

less perfect from its species; therefore if existence is nobler from its genus, it cannot be less perfect than essence from its species.

XXV. It is replied that the perfection and nobility of a thing can be considered in two ways: in one way according to generic and specific gradation, in accordance with which created natures have their inequality among themselves and one is better and more perfect than another; in another way, perfection and nobility are taken not according to the gradual latitude within a genus or species but in the very genus of being according as the actuality of being as being is opposed to potentiality, by which something is within causes and in the state of possibility — which is rather a nobility of state than of gradation. In the first way, nobility and perfection is taken from the constitutive form that is essential and intrinsic to the thing. In the second way, it is taken from the terminating actuality, which is not constitutive of the thing. Yet the entire essential and constitutive perfection is in potency and is perfected through the terminating actuality of existence, because through it the thing is placed outside causes, and without it the thing is nothing. Hence the thing stands to existence as first act to second act, and as the actuality of a determinate genus to actuality in the entire genus of being. We shall therefore say that essential perfection is called perfection simply within the latitude of its genus and in the order of gradual and specific perfection, but not in the genus of being simply. Hence existence from the formal aspect of its concept exceeds the actuality of essence as the actuality in the entire genus of being exceeds the actuality of a determinate genus, and as second act exceeds first act. But if existence is considered as it participates in the determinate and specific aspect by which existence is limited by the essence in which it is received, then it is inferior to essence insofar as it receives its specific limitation from essence. Therefore we say that the difference and inequality of perfection in created things is derived principally from the nobility and actuality of essence — as a human being is nobler than a stone — and this pertains to gradual perfection according to diverse specification; but the perfection of

existence does not pertain to gradation and specification but to the order of ultimate actuality and in the manner of the second entitative act, for placing the thing outside nothing and outside the state of possibility; by reason of which, Paul who exists and Peter who does not exist differ more in the order of being, even though according to the order of specific grade considered in themselves and abstracting from existence they differ less.

XXVI. To the first confirmation it is replied that essence is ordered to existence as first act to second act in the genus of being, even though existence is subordinated to essence in the genus of limitation and specification. Now the divine Word assumed what was more perfect in the genus of nature and essence, and contributed what was more perfect in the genus of formal and actual being, namely existence.

XXVII. To the second confirmation it is replied, from what has been said, that the nobility of operation and of nature is derived from essential perfections, because all of this pertains to gradual and specific perfection, which operation follows. Existence, on the other hand, confers nobility and perfection only in the formal genus of being itself, insofar as it places all that essential perfection of nature and nature — whether lowest or highest — outside nothing and outside causes; because without it all that perfection is nothing. As to what is said about a power being more perfect that abstracts more from existence: it is replied that it is not more perfect because it abstracts from existence as such, but because it abstracts from the conditions required for the exercise of existence, such that it is not limited to reaching its object under those conditions and not otherwise. But the intellect, which considers its objects independently of those conditions, also considers existence, though not in dependence on its exercise but as a perfection and actuality in itself; and in this order, the abstraction of existence is more perfect and more formal than the abstraction of essence, because it is more universal in the order of actuality, since it abstracts in itself from greater potentiality, for potentiality to

existence renders the thing in the state of possibility and of nothing, from which potentiality essence does not abstract in itself.

XXVIII. To what is said about the perfection of the genus, it is replied that what is placed per se and from its proper concept in a genus is per se contracted to a species, and if it has a more perfect genus, it also has a more perfect species per se speaking, because species is rooted in genus. But existence is not said to be more perfect from its genus as though it had a determinate and gradual genus from itself — since it is found across all genera of being — but it is from itself the most universal actuality of being, and in this sense it is said to be taken in the genus; it is however determined, or rather limited, not by contraction to a species but by reception in a subject; whereas forms are limited by reception and, when abstract, are perfected, as will be said below in Disputation 7.

XXIX. It remained to treat in the present place whether God alone is the principal cause of existence or also a created cause. But this will be treated more conveniently below in q. 8, a. 1. As for the material cause of existence — how the supposit itself is that cause and existence is truly and properly received in the existing thing — and also how an accident has an existence distinct from that of substance, yet not received in the accident itself but in the supposit by which it is sustained, unless it is separated by God from its subject, this is sufficiently established in this article and in the preceding one at the end.

ARTICLE II. Whether being is the proper effect of God? (Appendix: Cursus theologicus, De Deo uno, disp. 8, art. 2, pp. 11-17, 1886 Vives ed.)

I. The ground for doubt reduces to this: that a created agent truly and properly produces its own effects — otherwise we would fall into the absurdity of those who said that secondary causes do nothing at all, but that

God acts at their presence. Therefore either secondary causes produce something or they do nothing; if something, then they place a thing outside causes; but to whomever it belongs to place a thing outside causes, to that one it belongs to produce existence, since the formal effect of existence is to place a thing outside causes. To whomever therefore it belongs effectively to bring about such a formal effect, to that one it belongs effectively to bring about its form — just as to whoever it belongs effectively to make something white, it belongs effectively to reach that by which something is white.

II. Nor can it be said that created agents do not produce existence but unite it to essence, and that this suffices for them to be said to produce a thing in being — just as a man generating a man does not produce the form but unites it. For against this: first, the very union must be produced by the secondary cause, since if it did not produce even the union it would produce nothing; therefore it must at least give being to the produced union itself. But if it gives being to the union, why not to other entities? Second, because existence cannot be united as other forms are, since every union of a created form is either through inherence or through information, and both take place through dependence on a subject, which God can supply by separating the form from the subject. But existence is neither an informing nor an inhering form; otherwise God could not supply a created existence through His own — which Saint Thomas denies in III, q. 17, a. 2 — and could preserve existence without essence, which nevertheless cannot stand. And this is so because existence does not have its species and limitation except through the principles of the very essence to which it pertains reductively, for from itself it corresponds to being as being; therefore it does not express an entity constituted apart from itself and unitable to the essence after the manner of a supervening or inhering form, as Cajetan rightly notes in his commentary on c. 4 of De Ente et Essentia, q. 5. Now the human form is united by the generator because the generator produces all the dispositions required on the part of matter for the soul to be infused; but prior to existence no disposition

can be presupposed on the part of essence through which existence may be united to it, since prior to existence nothing is presupposed by which it could be disposed for such a union — as Saint Thomas teaches in III Sent., d. 2, q. 2, a. 2, and d. 13, q. 3, a. 1, and the doctors with him in III, q. 6, a. 6 — but every disposition is toward a substantial form and through that form toward existence.

III. Nor can it again be said that a secondary cause does indeed produce existence, but in the power of God. For against this: this is common to every created agent with respect to any effect proper to it — just as light is the proper effect of the sun and heat of fire, and yet these cannot produce these effects except in the power of God moving and concurring. Therefore even if a created agent produces being in the power of God, being will be no less its effect on that account than anything else produced by it. And Saint Thomas agrees with this, for he often teaches that to produce being is common to every agent, as in q. 7 De Potentia, a. 2, and q. 5 De Veritate, a. 9, and in Contra Gent. III, cc. 66 and 67. Therefore being is not the proper effect of God.

IV. Nevertheless the stated proposition is most true: that being is the proper effect of God, even though authors hold various opinions about its sense. The first explanation is that of Master Curiel, in his Opuscula, controversy 5, a. 2, n. 14, who distinguishes in that proposition two terms — namely, created being, and the phrase proper effect. He says that created being is taken by Saint Thomas not only for the being of existence but also for the being of essence, and universally for every aspect of participated being — not absolutely, but according to the aspect in which it is participated from God. And by the phrase proper effect he understands an adequate effect and as it were the formal specifying object of an active power, which is the same as the per se primary effect of some cause, said to be made per se primarily because it is not made accidentally or resulting as a consequence from something else.

And so the sense is that whatever grade, mode, or entity is the proper effect of God insofar as it is signified as a being by participation — if something is made per se primarily by God.

V. The reason for this explanation is that wherever Saint Thomas treats this proposition that being is the effect of God, he always compares the causality of God to other things as a participable form with respect to things that are participated — as fire with respect to what is ignited, and light with respect to what is illuminated — as is established in the present article and below in q. 45, a. 5, ad 1, and q. 104, a. 1. This is therefore a sign that Saint Thomas understands that being is the proper effect of God under this formality — namely as it is derived by participation from God — and since not only the being of existence but also the being of essence is derived from God as something participative of Him, the proposition of Saint Thomas is rightly understood of both.

VI. This explanation of Curiel is indeed true, as will be set out presently, but it seems deficient in two respects. First, because it does not formally explain the mind of Saint Thomas, who proves that being is the proper effect of God because God is being itself through essence; but this is understood of the being of existence, for it is proper to God that He is essentially, or through essence, existence itself — and this is what distinguishes Him from the remaining created beings. Therefore when he infers that being is the proper effect of God, he must be speaking of the being of existence, because this properly belongs to God alone through essence, in which He is distinguished from the remaining created beings; and so, in order that Saint Thomas's inference be formally valid and sound, it must be understood of the being of existence as the proper effect of God. Second, because although both the being of essence and the being of existence are participations of God, nevertheless the being of essence is not actually participated from God except insofar as it underlies existence — for without existence it is nothing.

Therefore in existence itself the proper nature of a divine effect and of participation in God shines forth more expressly and actually. This therefore remains to be explained in the view of Curiel: how the being of existence is more properly the effect of God than the being of essence, because without existence essence is an effect only in potency.

VII. The second explanation is that of Cajetan in the present place, who presupposes that Saint Thomas is speaking of the being of existence, and explains the term proper effect in this sense: that existence is the immediate effect from God according to the immediacy of the agent; and Cajetan verifies this in the following way — that being is the immediate effect of God, because God alone can bring about all that is required for something to exist, since every thing is either material or immaterial. If material, its being requires matter, which is immediately created and conserved by God alone. If immaterial, its entire substance is from God creating and conserving; and so God is introduced as immediately present by the immediacy of the supposit with respect to all things, both material and immaterial.

VIII. This explanation is found in Saint Thomas, Contra Gent. III, c. 68, reason 5. However, neither by Saint Thomas himself nor by Cajetan is it introduced as adequate for explaining the universal presence and intimate penetration of God in every being. For it is established that form depends on God no less than matter does, nor is God less present in form than in matter; and form so depends on God that it can also be annihilated by the subtraction of His influx — not because God infuses a distinct existence into form, matter, and the composite separately, but because that same existence affects all those parts, and God can by the suspension of an inadequately taken influx annihilate one and not another by substituting or co-creating another form. Therefore it is necessary that God be intimately present not only from the fact that He creates matter but also from the fact that form and every entity depend on Him — both in matter and in form — because being is more

deeply present in all things than anything else. Hence Saint Thomas in that argument only endeavors to show that God indeed has the immediacy of the supposit with respect to all created substances, but does not explain in that argument the intimate mode of divine contact; he explains that in other places.

IX. The third explanation is that of Cajetan below, q. 45, a. 5, at the section Ad evidentiam, who explains the phrase proper effect not as an immediate effect — that is, proceeding from God alone — but as the per se effect of God and as reducible per se primarily to God alone. Thus created causes also produce being, as Cajetan shows there; yet they do not produce being as causes that are per se primarily of it — just as it is one thing to produce something hot absolutely and another per se primarily: for heated water produces something hot, but not per se primarily, whereas fire does. And Saint Thomas never said that being is the effect of God alone — which is very much to be noted — but that being is the proper effect of God, just as what is ignited is the proper effect of fire; yet it is not repugnant for ignited iron to produce fire in tinder, but it will not be the proper and per se effect of the ignited iron, because it is not reduced ultimately to the iron itself even as ignited, but to fire itself — from which the ignited iron derives its condition of being ignited. So existence is indeed produced by the existing creature, but not as a proper effect of that creature and as per se primarily its own — not even of the creature as existing — but as reducible to the first existent, from which the existing creature derives its condition of being existent.

X. And a fuller understanding of this explanation can be had if we note that just as in formal predicates something belongs to a subject per se primarily and according to what the subject itself is, while something else belongs per se but not according to what the subject itself is — for example, animal belongs to human being per se and essentially but not primarily and according to what the human being itself is, since it belongs not convertibly with human

being but in common with other animals; whereas rational belongs to human being according to what the human being itself is, because it belongs convertibly with it and not convertibly with others — which is the express doctrine of the Philosopher in Post. An. I, c. 5, where Cajetan and Saint Thomas there, lect. 11 and 12, and Contra Gent. II, c. 15 may be consulted — so proportionally one must speak of those predicates insofar as they are the ground and principle of efficient action. For form is the principle of acting, and that effect which corresponds to a thing according to the predicate that belongs to it per se primarily and according to what the thing itself is, is called the proper effect of that cause, because it proceeds from the agent according to the aspect proper to it; for as Saint Thomas teaches in I, q. 41, a. 5, that is the ground of acting for some generator in which the generated thing is assimilated to it, since every agent intends to produce something like itself, and so the ground of producing is the ground of assimilating the effect to the agent. Therefore if the ground of producing stands as belonging properly and per se primarily to the agent, the effect derived from it will also be called the proper and per se effect of that agent. Existence in created things, therefore, stands only as a condition of acting, not as a ground — because in every created thing it belongs accidentally and not as a form constituting the nature to which the effect must be assimilated. But God alone has existence not as a condition but as the most formal ground constituting uncreated being, intrinsic to deity. Therefore no existence corresponds to a creature as its proper effect, but it corresponds only to God, because existence is not the proper and per se primarily belonging form of any creature, whereas it belongs to God essentially.

XI. This explanation is found in Saint Thomas in several places, but it may be especially consulted in Contra Gent. III, c. 66, the last reason, and in q. 7 De Potentia, a. 2, where he says: "Since the proper effect is produced by some cause according to its proper nature or form, diverse causes having diverse natures or forms must have diverse proper effects. Hence if they agree in some

effect, that effect is not proper to any of them but to some superior cause in whose power they act. Now all created causes share in one effect, which is being, although each has its own proper effects: for heat makes something be hot, and a builder makes a house be; they agree therefore in this, that they share in communicating being; but they differ in this, that fire causes a fire and a builder causes a house. Therefore there must be some cause superior to all of them, in whose power they cause being, and whose being is the proper effect — and this cause is God." Here Saint Thomas does not deny that created causes also produce being — since he says this is common to all — but only affirms that being is the proper and per se effect of God.

XII. But if you say: living and understanding are also proper form and nature of God, and yet not all effects of life or understanding are reduced to God as proper effects to their proper cause — therefore the doctrine adduced collapses. It is replied that living and understanding agree with existence in this: that they are of the concept of the essence of God insofar as they express the nature of pure act; but they differ in participation, in that intellective and living being, as participated and created, stands in creatures as a grade essentially constituting the creature; whereas existence always stands as a form belonging accidentally and not as an essential predicate. Hence existence can never be reduced to a creature as its proper effect, because existence never stands as the proper and essential form of a creature; whereas the effects of understanding and living in a created mode can be the proper effect of a creature, because it has for its essential constitutive form the vital and intellective form.

XIII. Nor does it stand in the way that Saint Thomas says in I, q. 50, a. 4, that being per se belongs to form, as roundness to a circle. For this is understood, following Cajetan there, as belonging per se to form with physical per se predication, not metaphysical — that is, it belongs to form as subordinated to an agent; for the agent per se produces form and through form being, and not

through matter; therefore compared to matter it belongs per se to form. And as Saint Thomas himself further indicates in Contra Gent. II, c. 55, being per se belongs to form quasi passively, not quasi actively — that is, form stands as the ground of receiving being from the agent, not as that from which being originates — just as to a transparent medium it per se belongs to shine, given the illumination of a luminous body, as its proper receptive of light; and form is connected per se with the ultimate disposition as with what makes matter fit to receive form. Or finally, being follows per se from form not absolutely but as such — for example, from the human form there follows existence as human, that is, as thus restricted, limited, and specified.

XIV. But you will still say: the heavens produce the nature of body in these lower things as a proper effect, and it is not reduced to another cause per se primarily; and yet the form of body is not proper to the heavens but common to all lower things. Therefore we falsely say that the proper effect of some cause is that which corresponds to it according to its proper form. It is replied that the nature of body can be taken in two ways: in one way logically, as it only expresses substance of three dimensions — and so it is a predicate common to celestial and elemental body, and according to this aspect of body it is not the proper effect of the heavens, since otherwise the heavens would cause themselves; rather in this way it is reduced to God, who alone can create all bodies, as Saint Thomas shows in I, q. 65, a. 3. In another way the nature of body is taken physically as subject to transmutation and motion, and in this way the heavens have the nature of the first body and the first altering agent; and in this way body is the proper effect of the heavens — not absolutely but as corruptible and alterable.

XV. The final explanation is that created being is the proper effect of God not absolutely and in all respects, nor as of such a species, nor as transmutable, but insofar as it is communicable through total influx. For in existence itself we can consider two things: first, the very nature of ultimate actuality, according

to which being corresponds to being as being; second, the specification and limitation of existence are considered, according to which it pertains to such and such a nature — for example, that it is the existence of a stone, or a horse, or a human being, etc. — by reason of which one existence is distinguished from another; and this restriction or limitation existence has not from its own proper concept as it corresponds to being, but as it corresponds to such a being or nature to which it is restricted and limited. We say therefore that being is the proper effect of God according to the nature of ultimate actuality and according to its universality by which it corresponds to being as being; but according to what it has of restriction and specification from the part of such and such a nature of which it is the being, it corresponds in that respect also to the created agent, which by producing the form or nature also produces being as restricted to that form. And this explanation is taken from Saint Thomas, q. 9 De Potentia, a. 1, in the body, where he says: "The causalities of being absolutely are reduced to the first universal cause; whereas the causality of other things that are superadded to being, or by which being is specified, pertains to secondary causes, which act through information, as it were presupposing the effect of the universal cause." Nor is it incongruous that some effect according to diverse considerations should correspond to diverse causes; and so existence according to the nature of universal actuality common to every being corresponds to the first being, but according to its specification and restriction — which it has from being the existence of such a being — it corresponds to the secondary cause productive of that being.

XVI. This difference between a creature and God with respect to the production of existence can however be explained still more deeply, from the part of the mode of operating of a created cause and of God. For the first cause is purely efficient but effects by transmuting; hence it has for its object only what is producible through transmutation. But being, speaking per se, is not the effect and terminus of transmutation but of efficiency; and so per se speaking it is the proper effect of what is purely efficient; whereas from some

accompanying circumstance it is the effect of a transmuting agent, namely by reason of the form which is produced through change. And this explanation is founded in Saint Thomas in II Sent., d. 15, q. 1, a. 2, where he says: "There are two kinds of agent: a divine agent, which is one that gives being, and a natural agent, which is one that transmutes; and the first mode of action belongs to God alone, but the second mode can also belong to others." The reason for this is that that form is per se transmutable, or producible through change, which has some contrary form or privation in matter, through the change of which matter passes from privation to act. But being, speaking per se, has no form contrary to itself or privation, because nothing is opposed to existence except nothing — for it is the act of being as being, and its formal effect is to place the thing outside nothing. Therefore from the force of this concept, which is proper to existence as existence, it does not belong to it to be produced through change but through the influx of God, through the suspension of which the thing is reduced to nothing. But by reason of the form that is produced through transmutation, the being itself that follows the form or its production through transmutation can also be produced and reached — though dependently on the influx of God. And by reason of this influx, God has the production of being in such a way that He must be undistant from each thing; whereas the production of being itself only through transmutation and as consequent upon the transmuted form does not per se require the undistance of the agent, but can be thus produced through a power diffused from itself.

XVII. To the ground of doubt stated at the beginning, we concede that being is also produced by a created agent as a principal cause and according to the power of acting that it has — though it corresponds to God in special ways so as to be His proper effect, as has been explained. And between the rational soul and existence there is a manifest difference: the rational soul is produced by God alone in such a way that it cannot in any way be produced by a creature even in the power of God; whereas existence, according to Saint

Thomas, is produced by a created agent at least under the aspect of what is transmuted and according to the specification it has from the form; and so it not only is united by a created agent — as the rational soul is united to matter by the generator — but truly proceeds from the created agent, just as the second act of operation, even though it exceeds the actuality of the potency or first act, nevertheless truly and properly proceeds from that potency as actuated and determined through the assistance of God, and does not merely unite the nature of the second act to the first act. In this way one must philosophize about existence, which is the second entitative act: for even though it exceeds the actuality of the created efficient cause, it nevertheless truly and properly proceeds from that cause as it is actuated and determined through the concurrence of God, and is not merely united to the essence by the created agent — especially since it can scarcely be explained how this union takes place without at the same time producing existence, since that existence is the terminus of the production in the achieved state of being, or rather is the very production in the achieved state of being. Hence production cannot be understood as uniting existence but as terminated through it. And finally this is pressed: because if existence itself, or a form, or something else is posited as a disposition so that existence may be united to it, this disposes either toward existence as placed outside causes or as within them. If as within causes, it has no other disposition than possibility, and so such a possibility disposes no more toward union with existence than does anything else that is within causes — but all things within causes are nothing, and so the thing remains equally undisposed for union with existence until it is placed outside causes. But if the form disposes toward the union of existence as outside causes, it is already presupposed as produced and existent, and consequently it does not dispose toward union but union comes about through the very production of existence.